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OF the Principles and Duties OF NATURAL RELIGION: TWO BOOKS.

By the Right Reverend Father in God, JOHN *late Lord Bishop of* CHESTER.

John Wilkins, bp. of Chester

To which is added, A SERMON Preached at his *Funerals*, by *WILLIAM LLOYD*, D. D. Dean of *BANGOR*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

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Wilkins, John, bp. of Chester

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THE PREFACE.

THE ensuing *Treatise* is sufficiently recommended to the World by the Name of the *Author*, and needs nothing else to make way for its entertainment. I shall only therefore give a short account of these *Remains* of that learned and excellent *Person*, and of the particular design and intention of them.

He was pleased by his *Last Will* to commit his *Papers* to my care, and out of his great

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friendship, and undeserved good opinion of me, to leave it wholly to my disposal, whether any, or what part of them, should be made publick. *This Treatise*, I knew, he always designed for that purpose; and if God had been pleased to have granted him but a little longer life, he would have published it himself: And therefore though a considerable part of it wanted his last hand, yet neither could I be so injurious, to deprive the world of it, because it was less perfect than he intended it; nor durst I be so bold, to attempt to *finish* a *Piece* designed and carried on

of

so far by so great a *Master*. The first *twelve Chapters* were written out for the Press, in his life-time. The *Remainder* hath been gather'd and made up out of his *Papers*, as well as the *Materials* left for that purpose, and the skill of the *Compiler* would allow: So that it cannot be expected, that the *Work* should be of equal strength and beauty in all the parts of it. However, such as it is, I hope it may prove of considerable use and benefit to the World, and not altogether unworthy of its *Author*.

The *Design* of it is threefold. *First*, To establish the great

Principles of *Religion*, the *Being of God*, and a *Future State*; by ſhewing how firm and ſolid a Foundation they have in the Nature and Reaſon of Mankind; A work never more neceſſary than in this degenerate Age, which hath been ſo miſerably over-run with *Scepticiſme* and *Infidelity*.

Secondly, To convince men of the *natural* and indiſpenſable obligation of *Moral Duties*; thoſe I mean, which are comprehended by our *Saviour* under the two general *Heads* of *the Love of God* and *of our Neighbour*. For all the great *Duties* of *Piety* and *Juſtice* are written upon

upon our hearts, and every man feels a ſecret obligation to them in his own Conſcience, which checks and reſtrains him from doing contrary to them, and gives him peace and ſatisfaction in the diſcharge of his duty, or in caſe he offend againſt it fills him with guilt and terrour.

And certainly it is a thing of very conſiderable uſe, rightly to underſtand the natural obligation of Moral duties, and how neceſſarily they flow from the conſideration of *God* and of *our ſelves*. For it is a great miſtake, to think that the obligation of them doth ſolely

depend upon the Revelation of Gods Will made to us in the *Holy Scriptures*. It is plain that Mankind was always under a *Law*, even before God had made any external and extraordinary Revelation; else, how shall God judge the World? how shall they to whom the *Word of God* never came be acquitted or condemned at the *Great day*? For *where there is no Law*, there can neither be *obedience* nor *transgression*.

It is indeed an unspeakable advantage which we who are *Christians* do enjoy, both in respect of the more clear and cer-

tain knowledg of our duty in all the branches of it; and likewise in regard of the powerful motives and assistance which our blessed *Saviour* in his *Gospel* offers to us, to enable and encourage us to the discharge of our Duty: But yet it is nevertheless very useful for us to consider the primary and natural obligation to *piety* and *virtue*, which we commonly call the *Law of Nature*; this being every whit as much the *Law of God*, as the *Revelation* of his Will in his *Word*; and consequently, nothing contained in the *Word of God*, or in any pretended *Revelation* from *Him*,

can be interpreted to dissolve the obligation of moral duties plainly required by the Law of Nature. And if this one thing were but well consider'd, it would be an effectual antidote against the pernicious Doctrines of the *Antinomians*, and of all other *Libertine-Enthusiasts* whatsoever: Nothing being more incredible, than that *Divine Revelation* should contradict the clear & unquestionable Dictates of *Natural Light*; nor any thing more vain, than to fancy that the *Grace of God* does release men from the *Laws of Nature.*

This the *Author* of the following

lowing *Discourses* was very sensible of, and wisely saw of what consequence it was to establish the *Principles* and *Duties* of Religion upon their true and natural foundation; which is so far from being a prejudice to *Divine Revelation*, that it prepares the way for it, and gives it greater advantage and authority over the minds of men.

Thirdly, To perswade men to the *practice* of *Religion*, and the *vertues* of a good life, by shewing how natural and direct an influence they have not, only upon our *future* blessedness in another World, but even upon the happiness and prosperity

rity of this *present* Life. And surely nothing is more likely to prevail with wise and considerate men to become Religious, than to be throughly convinced, that *Religion* and *Happiness*, our *Duty* and our *Interest*, are really but one and the same thing considered under several notions.

J. TILLOTSON.

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THE FIRST BOOK:

Shewing

The Reaſonableneſs of the Principles and Duties of *Natural Religion.*

CHAP. I.

Concerning the ſeveral kinds of Evidence *and* Aſſent.

I Intend, by Gods aſſiſtance, in this Firſt Book, to treat concerning the Reaſonableneſs and the Credibility of the Principles of *Natural Religion*, in oppoſition to that Humour of Scepticiſm and Infidelity, which hath of late ſo much abounded in the world, not only amongſt ſenſual men of the vulgar ſort, but even amongſt thoſe who pretend to a more than ordinary meaſure of wit and learning.

In my entrance upon this work, I am ſenſible of what ill conſequence it may be, to lay the ſtreſs of a weighty cauſe upon *weak* or *obſcure* Arguments, which inſtead of *convincing* men, will rather *harden* and *confirm* them in their Errors.

And therefore I cannot but think my ſelf obliged in the management of this Argument, to uſe my utmoſt caution and endeavour, that it be done with ſo much ſtrength and perſpicuity, as may be ſufficient to convince any man, who hath but an *ordinary capacity*, and an *honeſt mind*; which are no other qualifications than what are required to the inſtitution of men, in all kinds of Arts and Sciences whatſoever.

In order to this, I judg it expedient to premiſe ſomething concerning the ſeveral *kinds* and *degrees* of *Evidence* and *Aſſent*, and to lay down ſome common *principles*, which may ſerve as a foundation to the following Diſcourſe.

The ſeveral ways whereby men come to the knowledg or belief of any thing without immediate *Revelation*, are either by ſuch *Evidence of things* as is more

Simple

- *Simple*, relating to the
  - *Senſes*,
    - *Outward.*
    - *Inward.*
  - *Underſtanding*, ariſing either from the
    - *Nature of the things* in themſelves.
    - *Teſtimony of others* concerning them.
- *Mixed*, relating both to the *Senſes* and *Underſtanding*.

I. By *Senſes* I mean thoſe *faculties* whereby we are enabled to diſcern and know ſuch *particular* objects as are *preſent*. Theſe are either

1. *Outward*, by which we can apprehend *external* objects, as when we ſee, or hear, or touch any thing preſented to us.

2. *Inward*, by which we can diſcern *internal* objects, and are conſcious to our ſelves, or ſenſible both of the impreſſions that are made upon our outward *ſenſes*, and of the inward motions of our *minds*; namely, our apprehenſions, inclinations, and the power of determining our ſelves, as to our own Actions; and by which we can at any time be aſſured of what we think, or what we deſire, or purpoſe.

II. By *Underſtanding*, I mean that faculty whereby we are enabled to apprehend the objects of Knowledg, *Generals* as well as *Particulars*, *Abſent* things as well as *Preſent*; and to judg of their *Truth* or *Falſhood*, *Good* or *Evil*.

That kind of *Evidence* may be ſaid to ariſe from the *nature of things*, when there is ſuch a Congruity or Incongruity betwixt the *Terms* of a *Propoſition*, or the *Deductions* of one Propoſition from another, as doth either ſatisfie the mind, or elſe leave it in doubt and heſitation about them.

That kind of *Evidence* is ſaid to ariſe from *Teſtimony*, when we depend upon the credit and relation of others for the truth or falſhood of any thing. There being ſeveral things which we cannot otherwiſe know, but as others do inform us of them. As namely *matters of fact*, together with the account of *Perſons* and *Places* at a diſtance. Which kind of Evidence will be more or leſs clear, according to the authority and credit of the Witneſs.

Beſides theſe, there is a *mixed kind of Evidence* relating both to the Senſes and Underſtanding, depending upon our own obſervation and repeated trials of the iſ-

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ſues and events of Actions or Things, called *Experience*.

Theſe are the ſeveral *kinds* of *Evidence*, whereby we attain to the knowledg or belief of things.

The *kinds* of *Aſſent* proceeding from them are reducible to theſe two Heads.

I. *Knowledg* or *Certainty*, which may be diſtinguiſhed into three kinds, which I crave leave to call by the names of,
- *Phyſical.*
- *Mathematical.*
- *Moral.*

II. *Opinion* or *Probability*.

I. That kind of *Aſſent* which doth ariſe from ſuch plain and clear Evidence, as doth not admit of any reaſonable cauſe of doubting, is called *Knowledg* or *Certainty*.

1. I call that *Phyſical* Certainty which doth depend upon the Evidence of *ſenſe*, which is the firſt and *higheſt kind of Evidence*, of which humane nature is capable.

Nothing can be more manifeſt and plain to me, than that I now ſee ſomewhat which hath the appearance of ſuch a colour or figure, than that I have in my

mind ſuch a thought, deſire or purpoſe, and do feel within my ſelf a certain power of determining my own actions, which is called *Liberty*.

To ſay that we cannot tell whether we have *Liberty*, becauſe we do not underſtand the manner of *Volition*, is all one as to ſay, That we cannot tell whether we *ſee* or *hear*, becauſe we do not underſtand the manner of *ſenſation*.

He that would go about to confute me in any of theſe Apprehenſions, ought to bring a *Medium* that is better known, and to derive his Argument from ſomewhat that is more evident and certain than theſe things are, unleſs he can think to overthrow and confute that which is more plain and certain, by that which is leſs plain and certain, which is all one, as to go about to out-weigh a heavy body by ſomewhat that is lighter, or to attempt the proving of ten to be more than eleven, than which nothing can be more abſurd.

2. I call that *Mathematical* Certainty, which doth more eminently belong to *Mathematical* things, not intending hereby to exclude ſuch other matters as are capable of the like certainty; namely, all ſuch *ſimple* abſtracted beings, as in their own

own natures do lie ſo open, and are ſo obvious to the underſtanding, that every man's judgment (though never ſo much prejudiced) muſt neceſſarily aſſent to them. 'Tis not poſſible for any man in his wits, (though never ſo much addicted to Paradoxes) to believe otherwiſe, but that the *whole is greater than the part*; That *contradictions cannot be both true*; That *three and three make ſix*; That *four is more than three.*

There is ſuch a kind of Connexion betwixt the Terms of ſome Propoſitions, and ſome Deductions are ſo neceſſary as muſt unavoidably enforce our aſſent. There being an evident neceſſity that ſome things muſt be ſo, or not ſo, according as they are affirmed or denied to be, and that ſuppoſing our faculties to be true, they cannot poſſibly be otherwiſe, without implying a Contradiction.

3. I call that *Moral* Certainty, which hath for its object ſuch beings as are *leſs ſimple*, and do more depend upon mixed circumſtances. Which though they are not capable of the ſame kind of Evidence with the former, ſo as to neceſſitate every man's aſſent, though his judgment be never ſo much prejudiced againſt them; yet may they be ſo plain, that

every man whose judgment is free from prejudice will consent unto them. And though there be no natural necessity, that such things must be so, and that they cannot possibly be otherwise, without implying a Contradiction; yet may they be so certain as not to admit of any reasonable doubt concerning them.

Under each of these Heads there are several Propositions which may be styled *Self-evident* and *first Principles*.

Self-evident, because they are of themselves so plain, as not to be capable of proof from any thing that is clearer or more known.

First Principles, because they cannot be proved *à priori*; That which is first can have nothing before it.

Only they may receive some kind of *Illustration*, by *Instances*, and *Circumstances*, and by such Universal *effects* as do proceed from them; and from the monstrous *Absurdities* that will follow upon the denial of them.

Such *deductions* as do necessarily flow from these Principles have the same kind of Certainty, whether *Physical*, *Mathematical*, or *Moral*, with the Principles themselves from which they are deduced.

The two first of these, namely, *Physical* and

and *Mathematical* Certainty may be ſtyled *Infallible*; and *Moral* Certainty may properly be ſtyled *Indubitable.*

By *Infallible Certainty*, I do not mean *abſolute* infallibility, becauſe that is an *Incommunicable Attribute.* And it were no leſs than a blaſphemous arrogance, for any man to pretend to ſuch a perfect unerring judgment on which the divine power it ſelf could not impoſe. But I mean a *Conditional infallibility*, that which ſuppoſes our faculties to be true, and that we do not neglect the exerting of them. And upon ſuch a ſuppoſition there is a neceſſity that ſome things muſt be ſo as we apprehend them, and that they cannot poſſibly be otherwiſe.

By *indubitable Certainty*, I mean that which doth not admit of any reaſonable cauſe of doubting, which is the only certainty of which moſt things are capable; and this may properly be aſcribed both to that kind of evidence ariſing from the *Nature of things*, and likewiſe to that which doth ariſe from *Teſtimony*, or from *Experience.*

I am from the nature of the things themſelves *Morally* certain, and cannot make any doubt of it, but that a *mind free from paſſion and prejudice is more fit*

to

to paſs a true judgment, than ſuch a one as is byaſſed by affections and intereſts. That *there are ſuch things as Vertue and Vice.* That *Mankind is naturally deſigned for a ſociable life.* That *it is moſt agreeable to reaſon and the common intereſts of thoſe in ſociety, that they ſhould be true to their Compacts, that they ſhould not hurt an innocent perſon*, &c.

And as for the evidence from *Teſtimony* which depends upon the credit and authority of the Witneſſes, theſe may be ſo qualified as to their *ability* and *fidelity*, that a man muſt be a fantaſtical incredulous fool to make any doubt of them. And by this it is that I am ſufficiently aſſured, That there was ſuch a perſon as Queen *Elizabeth*; That there is ſuch a place as *Spain.*

And ſo for the evidence of *Experience*, I am by that to a great degree aſſured of the ſucceſſion of Night and Day, Winter and Summer. And have no ſuch reaſon to doubt, whether the houſe wherein now I am, ſhall this next minute fall upon me, or the earth open and ſwallow it up, as to be in continual fear of ſuch accidents.

II. That kind of Aſſent which doth ariſe from ſuch evidence as is leſs plain and clear,

clear, is called *Opinion* and *Probability*. When though the proofs for a thing may preponderate any thing to be ſaid againſt it, yet they are not ſo weighty and perſpicuous as to exclude all reaſonable doubt and fear of the contrary.

And this doth ariſe from a more imperfect and obſcure repreſentation and conception of things, either by our Senſes or Underſtandings, by Teſtimony or by Experience.

When the Evidence on each ſide doth equiponderate, this doth not properly beget any Aſſent, but rather a *Heſitation* or ſuſpenſion of Aſſent.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Two Schemes *of Principles relating to* Practical *things, whether* Natural *or* Moral, *propoſed in the Method uſed by Mathematicians of* Poſtulata, Definitions *and* Axioms.

Vid. Dr. H. More:

HAving premiſed theſe things in general, concerning ſeveral kinds of Evidences and Aſſents: I ſhall in the next place offer ſome particular Schemes of Principles, relating to Practical things, whether Natural or Moral, in the ſame way and method as is uſed in the Mathematics, conſiſting of *Poſtulata*, *Definitions* and *Axioms*.

A *Scheme* of Natural Principles.

Poſtulatum.

Every thing is endowed with ſuch a natural Principle, whereby it is neceſſarily inclined to promote its own preſervation and well-being.

That which hath in it a fitneſs to promote

mote this end is called Good. *And on the contrary that which is apt to hinder it is called* Evil. *Amongſt which there are ſeveral* degrees, *according as things have more or leſs fitneſs to promote or hinder this end.* Definition. 1.

The leſſening or eſcaping of Evil *is to be reckoned under the notion of* Good. Def. 2.

The leſſening or loſs of Good *is to be reckoned under the notion of* Evil.

That which is Good *is to be choſen and proſecuted, that which is* Evil *to be avoided.* Axiom 1.

The greater Good is to be preferred before the leſs, and the leſſer Evil to be endured rather than the greater. 2.

Such kinds of things or events, whether Good or Evil, as will certainly come to paſs, may fall under computation, and be eſtimated as to their ſeveral degrees, as well as things preſent. Becauſe when ſuch a ſpace of time is elapſed, that which is now *future*, will become *preſent*. Which is the ground of mens dealing for *Reverſions.* 3.

And thus likewiſe is it for ſuch things as may probably come to paſs; Though this probability ſhould be ſomewhat remote. It is counted a valuable thing, and may be eſtimated at a certain rate, for a man 4.

to

to be one amongſt four or five equal Competitors for a place, to be the fourth or fifth expectant of an inheritance; though in ſuch caſes there be the odds of three or four to one, yet the price that is ſet upon this, may be ſo proportioned, as either to reduce it to an equality, or make it a very advantageous bargain.

5. *A preſent Good may reaſonably be parted with, upon a probable expectation of a future Good which is more excellent.* Which is the caſe of Merchants, who have large eſtates in their own poſſeſſion, which they may ſafely keep by them; and yet chuſe to venture them upon a thouſand hazards, out of an apprehenſion that there is a greater probability of their gaining, than of their loſing by ſuch adventures.

And this would be much more reaſonable, if beſides the probability of gaining by theſe adventures, there were the like probability of their being utterly undone and ruined, if they ſhould neglect or refuſe to venture.

The greater the advantage is, the more reaſonable muſt it be to adventure for it. If it be reaſonable for a man to run the venture of 20 *l.* for the gain

gain of a hundred pounds, much more for a thouſand.

The reaſon why men are moved to believe a probability of gain by adventuring their ſtocks into ſuch Forraign Countries as they have never ſeen, and of which they have made no trial, is from the Teſtimony of other Credible perſons, who profeſs to have known thoſe places, and the advantages of traffick thither by their own experience. And this is generally accounted a ſufficient argument to perſwade others unto the like trials.

The reaſon which moved men to adventure for the firſt diſcovery of unknown Countries, is, becauſe they had fair probabilities to perſwade them, that there were ſuch places, which would probably afford very gainful Traffique.

And upon the ſame ground, if any conſiderable number of men, ſuch whom we eſteem the moſt wiſe and the moſt honeſt, ſhould aſſure us, that they did firmly believe, (though they did not know it by experience), that there was ſuch an undiſcovered Country, to which if men would make any ventures, their gains would be a thouſand times more than could be expected by any other way

way of Traffique; and that upon this perſwaſion, they themſelves did reſolve to venture their eſtates, and ſhould withal offer ſuch arguments for the reaſonableneſs of what they aſſert, as to any men, whoſe judgments were unprejudiced, would render it much more probable than the contrary: In this caſe, he that would act rationally, according to ſuch rules and principles as all mankind do obſerve in the government of their actions, muſt be perſwaded to do the like, unleſs he would be counted fooliſh, and one that did affect ſingularity.

6. *A preſent Evil is to be endured, for the avoiding of a probable future Evil, which is far greater.* Which is the reaſon of mens undergoing the miſchiefs and hardſhips of War, the charges and vexations of Law-ſuits, the trouble of Faſting and Phyſick. A man will endure the pain of hunger and thirſt, and refuſe ſuch meats and drinks as are moſt grateful to his appetite, if he be perſwaded that they will endanger his health, eſpecially if he believe that they are poiſoned. He will chuſe to take nauſeous offenſive Phyſick, upon a probable expectation, that he may thereby prevent

vent or cure a dangerous ſickneſs.

The greater the Evil is, the more reaſon is there to venture the loſs of a leſs Good, or the ſuffering of a leſs evil, for the eſcaping of it. 7.

A *Scheme* of Moral Principles.

There are ſeveral *kinds* of Creatures in the world, and ſeveral *degrees* of dignity amongſt them, ſome being more excellent than others, *Animate* more than *Inanimate*, *Senſitives* more than *Vegetatives*, and *Men* more than *Brutes*. It is a greater preheminence to have *life*, than to be without it; to have *life* and *ſenſe*, than to have *life* only; to have *life*, *ſenſe*, and *reaſon*, than to have only *life* and *ſenſe*. Poſtulatum.

That which doth conſtitute any thing in its being, and diſtinguiſh it from all other things, is called the *Form* or *Eſſence* of ſuch a thing. Defin. 1.

That ſtate or condition by which the nature of any thing is advanced to the utmoſt perfection of which it is capable according to its rank and kind, is called the *chief end* or *happineſs* of ſuch a thing. Defin. 2.

The *nature* of *Plants* doth conſiſt in

having a *Vegetative* Soul, by which they receive nouriſhment and growth, and are enabled to multiply their kind.

The utmoſt perfection which this kind of Being is capable of, is to grow up to a ſtate of maturity, to continue unto its natural period, and to propagate its kind.

The *nature* of *Brutes* (beſides what is common to them with *Plants*) doth conſiſt in having ſuch faculties, whereby they are capable of apprehending external objects, and of receiving pain or pleaſure from them.

The *perfection* proper to theſe doth conſiſt in ſenſitive pleaſures, or the enjoying of ſuch things as are grateful to their appetites and ſenſes.

The *nature* of *Man* (beſides what is common to him with *Plants* and *Brutes*) doth conſiſt in that faculty of Reaſon, whereby he is made capable of Religion, of apprehending a Deity, and of expecting a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Which are capacities common to all mankind, notwithſtanding the utmoſt endeavours that can be uſed for the ſuppreſſing of them; and which no other Creature in this viſible world, except Man, doth partake of.

The

The *happineſs* of man doth conſiſt in the perfecting of this faculty; that is, in ſuch a ſtate or condition as is moſt agreeable to reaſon, and as may entitle him to the Divine favour, and afford him the beſt aſſurance of a bleſſed eſtate after this life.

That which every man doth and muſt propoſe unto himſelf, is the being in as good a condition as he is capable of, or as is reaſonable for him to expect. And the deſire of this is not properly a *duty* or a *moral vertue*, about which men have a liberty of Acting, but 'tis a *natural principle*, like the deſcent of heavy bodies, it flows neceſſarily from the very frame of our natures; men muſt do ſo, nor can they do otherwiſe.

The Cuſtomary Actions of men, conſidered as *Voluntary*, and as *capable of Reward* or *Puniſhment*, are ſtyled *Moral.* Defin. 3.

As that which hath a fitneſs to promote the Well-fare of man conſidered as a *Senſitive* Being, is ſtyled *Natural Good*; ſo that which hath a fitneſs to promote the Well-fare of man as a *Rational voluntary and free Agent*, is ſtyled *Moral Good.* And the contrary to it *Moral Evil.* Defin. 4.

Ax. 1. That which is morally *good* is to be *deſired* and proſecuted, that which is *evil* is to be *avoided.*

Ax. 2. The greater *congruity* or *incongruity* there is in any thing to the reaſon of Mankind, and the greater tendency it hath, to *promote* or *hinder* the perfection of mans nature, ſo much greater degrees hath it of moral *Good* or *Evil.* To which we ought to proportion our *Inclination* or *Averſion.*

There is in ſome things ſuch a natural decency and fitneſs, as doth render them moſt agreeable to our reaſon, and will be ſufficient to recommend them to our practice, abſtracting from all conſiderations of Reward. As in loving thoſe who are kind to us, and from whom we receive benefit: In compenſating Good with Good, and not with Evil.

It is moſt ſuitable both to the Reaſon and Intereſt of mankind, that every one ſhould ſubmit themſelves to him, upon whom they depend for their Well-being, by doing ſuch things as may render them Acceptable to him.

It is a deſireable thing for a man to have the aſſiſtance of others in his need and diſtreſs. And 'tis not reaſonable for him to expect this from others, unleſs he

he himſelf be willing to ſhew it to others.

The *rational* nature and the *Perfection* belonging to it being more noble than the *Senſitive*, Therefore *Moral* Good is to be preferred before *Natural*, and that which is *Morally* Evil is more to be *hated* and avoided, than that which is Natural. Ax. 3.

A *preſent Natural Good* may be parted with upon a probable expectation of a *future Moral good.* Ax. 4.

A *preſent Natural Evil* is to be endured for the probable avoiding of a *future Moral Evil.* Ax. 5.

CHAP. III.

Some Propoſitions neceſſary to be premiſed for the removing of ſeveral prejudices in Debates about Religion.

BEſides what hath been already ſuggeſted concerning the firſt foundations to be laid, in order to a diſcourſe about Natural Religion, I ſhall in the next place offer to conſideration theſe ſeven following Propoſitions, as being very proper to prevent or obviate the Cavils of Sceptical captious men.

1. *Such things as in themſelves are equally true and certain, may not yet be capable of the ſame* kind *or* degree *of Evidence as to us.* As for inſtance, *That there was ſuch a man as King* Henry *the Eighth, that there are ſuch places as* America, *or* China. I ſay theſe things may in themſelves be equally true and certain with thoſe other matters, *That we now ſee and are awake, That the three Angles in a Triangle are equal to two right ones.* Though for the firſt of theſe we have only

only the teſtimony of others, and humane tradition, whereas for the other we have ſenſitive proof, and Mathematical demonſtration. And the reaſon is becauſe all Truths are in themſelves equal, according to that ordinary Maxim, *Veritas non recipit magis & minus.* And therefore nothing can be more irrational than for a man to doubt of, or deny the truth of any thing, becauſe it cannot be made out, by ſuch kind of proofs of which the nature of ſuch a thing is not capable. A man may as well deny there is any ſuch thing as *Light* or *Colour*, becauſe he cannot *hear* it; or *ſound*, becauſe he cannot *ſee* it, as to deny the truth of other things becauſe they cannot be made out by ſenſitive or demonſtrative proofs. The kinds of Probation for ſeveral things being as much diſproportioned, as the objects of the ſeveral ſenſes are to one another.

2. *Things of ſeveral kinds may admit and require ſeveral ſorts of proofs, all which may be good in their kind.* The Philoſopher hath long ago told us, that according to the divers nature of things, ſo muſt the Evidences for them be; and that 'tis an argument of an undiſciplined wit not to acknowledg this. He that is rational and judicious will expect no other

2. *Ariſtot.* Eth. lib. 1. cap. 3. Metaph. lib. 1. cap. ult.

kind of Arguments in any caſe than the ſubject-matter will bear. How incongruous would it be for a Mathematician to perſwade with eloquence, to uſe all imaginable inſinuations and intreaties that he might prevail with his hearers to believe that *three and three make ſix*. It would be altogether as vain and improper in matters belonging to an Orator to pretend to ſtrict Demonſtration. All things are not capable of the ſame kind of Evidence. Though the Concluſions in *Mathematicks*, by reaſon of the *abſtracted* nature of thoſe Sciences, may be demonſtrated by the cleareſt and moſt unqueſtionable way of Probation to our reaſon, yet it is not rational to expect the like proof, in ſuch other matters as are not of the like nature. This he himſelf applys to *Moral* things, which being not of ſuch *ſimple abſtracted* natures, but depending upon *mixed* circumſtances, are not therefore capable of ſuch kind of Demonſtrative proofs. 'Tis a ſaying of *Jamblicus*, That demonſtrations are not to be expected in matters concerning God and divine things. Nor is this any greater prejudice to the certainty of ſuch things, than it is that God is inviſible. And thus likewiſe it is, for the ſame reaſon, with many parti-

Protrept. in Symbol. 25.

particular concluſions in *Natural Philoſophy*. And as for *matters of Fact*, concerning Times, Places, Perſons, Actions, which depend upon *Story* and the relation of others, theſe things are not capable of being proved by ſuch ſcientifical Principles as the others are. Now no ſober man can deny but that ſeveral things in *Moral* and in *Natural* Philoſophy are in themſelves as abſolutely and as certainly true, and as firmly believ'd by us, as any *Mathematical* principle or concluſion can be. From whence I infer this, That it is not, ought not to be, any prejudice to the Truth or Certainty of any thing, that it is not to be made out by ſuch kind of proofs, of which the nature of that thing is not capable, provided it be capable of ſatisfactory proofs of another kind.

3. *When a thing is capable of good proof in any kind, men ought to reſt ſatisfy'd in the beſt evidence for it, which that kind of things will bear, and beyond which better could not be expected, ſuppoſing it were true.* They ought not to expect either ſenſible proof, or demonſtration for ſuch matters as are not capable of ſuch proofs, ſuppoſing them to be true. Becauſe otherwiſe nothing muſt be aſſented to and believed, but that which hath the higheſt 3.

Evi-

Evidence: All other things being to be looked upon, as uncertain and doubtful, and wholly excluded from all poſſibility of being known. And at this rate, men muſt believe nothing at all in ſtory, becauſe ſuch things cannot be demonſtrated; and 'tis poſſible that the reſt of Mankind might have combined together to impoſe upon them by theſe relations. And how abhorrent ſuch Sceptical Principles muſt needs be to common reaſon, I need not ſay. Thoſe who will pretend ſuch kind of grounds for their disbelief of any thing, will never be able to perſwade others, that the true cauſe why they do not give their Aſſent is becauſe they have no *reaſon* for it, but becauſe they have no mind to it. *Nolle in cauſa eſt, non poſſe prætenditur.*

And on the other ſide, when we have for the proof of any thing, ſome of the higheſt kinds of Evidence, in this caſe it is not the ſuggeſtion of a meer poſſibility, that the thing may be otherwiſe, that ought to be any ſufficient cauſe of doubting.

To which I ſhall only add, that we may be unqueſtionably ſure of many things as to their *exiſtence*, and yet we may not be able to explain the nature of

of them. No man in his wits can make any doubt, whether there be ſuch things as Motion, and Senſation, and Continuity of Bodies: And yet theſe things are commonly eſteemed inexplicable. So that our not being able to ſee to the bottom of things, and to give a diſtinct account of the *nature* and *manner* of them, can be no ſufficient cauſe to doubt of their *being*.

4. *The mind of man may and muſt give a firm aſſent to ſome things, without any kind of heſitation or doubt of the contrary, where yet the Evidences for ſuch things are not ſo infallible, but that there is a poſſibility, that the things may be otherwiſe.* (*i.e.*) There may be an *indubitable* certainty, where there is not an *infallible* certainty. And that kind of certainty which doth not admit of any doubt, may ſerve us as well to all intents and purpoſes, as that which is infallible. A man may make no doubt, whether he himſelf were baptized, whether ſuch perſons were his parents, of which yet he can have no other Evidence than Tradition, and the Teſtimony of others. Who is there ſo wildly Sceptical as to queſtion, whether the Sun ſhall riſe in the Eaſt, and not in the North or Weſt, or whether it ſhall riſe 4.

riſe at all: Becauſe the contrary is not impoſſible, and doth not imply any Contradiction? Suppoſe that in digging of the Earth amongſt ſome ancient ruins, a man ſhould find a round flat piece of Metal, in the exact ſhape of an old Medal, with the Image and Inſcription of one of the *Roman* Emperours. Or ſuppoſe he ſhould dig up a large ſtone, of the ſhape of an ancient Tomb-ſtone, with a diſtinct Inſcription upon it, of the name and quality of ſome perſon ſaid to be buried under it. Can any rational man doubt, whether one of theſe were not a piece of Coyn, and the other a Grave-ſtone? or ſhould a man be bound to ſuſpend his aſſent and belief of this, barely upon this ground, becauſe 'tis poſſible that theſe might have been the natural ſhapes of that particular Metal and Stone, and that thoſe which ſeem to be letters or figures engraven or emboſſed upon it, may be nothing elſe but ſome caſual dents or cavities, which by the various motions and temper of the matter did happen to them, amongſt thoſe many millions of other figures which they were capable of? Who would not think ſuch a man to be ſtrangely wild, and irrational, who could frame to himſelf any real ſcruples from

from ſuch Conſiderations as theſe? Why, 'tis the ſame kind of abſurd dotage that Scepticks in Religion are guilty of, in ſuſpending their aſſent meerly upon this ground, becauſe ſome Arguments for it do not ſo infallibly conclude, but that there is a poſſibility things may be otherwiſe. He that will raiſe to himſelf, and cheriſh in his mind, any real doubts, according to the meer poſſibility of things, ſhall not be able to determine himſelf to the belief or practice of any thing. He muſt not ſtay within doors, for fear the houſe ſhould fall upon him, for that is poſſible: nor muſt he go out, leſt the next man that meets him ſhould kill him, for that alſo is poſſible. And ſo muſt it be for his doing or forbearing any other action. Nay I add further, *that* man is ſure to be deceived in very many things, who will doubt of every thing, where 'tis poſſible he may be deceived.

I appeal to the common judgment of Mankind, whether the humane nature be not ſo framed, as to acquieſce in ſuch a *Moral certainty*, as the nature of things is capable of; and if it were otherwiſe, whether that Reaſon which belongs to us, would not prove a burden and a torment to us, rather than a priviledg, by keep-

keeping us in a continual ſuſpenſe, and thereby rendring our conditions perpetually reſtleſs and unquiet? Would not ſuch men be generally accounted out of their wits, who could pleaſe themſelves, by entertaining *actual hopes* of any thing, meerly upon account of the poſſibility of it; or torment themſelves with *actual fears*, of all ſuch evils as are poſſible? Is there any thing imaginable more wild and extravagant amongſt thoſe in Bedlam, than this would be? Why, *Doubt* is a kind of *fear*, and is commonly ſtyled *formido oppoſiti*, and 'tis the ſame kind of madneſs for a man to *doubt* of any thing, as to *hope for*, or *fear* it, upon a meer poſſibility.

5. 5. *'Tis ſufficient that matters of Faith and Religion be propounded in ſuch a way, as to render them highly credible, ſo as an honeſt and teachable man may willingly and ſafely aſſent to them, and according to the rules of Prudence be juſtified in ſo doing.* Nor is it either *Neceſſary* or *Convenient*, that they ſhould be eſtabliſhed by ſuch cogent Evidence, as to neceſſitate aſſent. Becauſe this would not leave any place for the vertue of *Believing*, or the freedom of our obedience; nor any ground for Reward and Puniſhment.

ment. It would not be thank-worthy for a man to believe that which of neceſſity he muſt believe, and cannot otherwiſe chuſe.

Rewards and Puniſhments do properly belong to *free* Actions, ſuch as are under a mans power, either to do or forbear; not to ſuch as are *neceſſary*. There is no more reaſon to reward a man for believing that four is more than three, than for being hungry or ſleepy; Becauſe theſe things do not proceed from *choice*, but from *natural neceſſity*. A man muſt do ſo, nor can he do otherwiſe.

I do not ſay, That the Principles of Religion are meerly *probable*, I have before aſſerted them to be *Morally certain*. And that to a man who is careful to preſerve his mind free from prejudice, and to *conſider*, they will appear *unqueſtionable*, and the *deductions* from them *demonſtrable*: But now becauſe that which is neceſſary to beget this certainty in the mind, namely, *impartial Conſideration*, is in a mans power, therefore the *belief* or *disbelief* of theſe things is a proper ſubject for *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*.

There would be little reaſon for the Scripture ſo much to magnifie the Grace of *Faith*, as being ſo great a vertue and ſo acceptа-

ceptable to God, if every one were neceſſitated to it, whether he would or no. And therefore God is pleaſed to propoſe theſe matters of belief to us in ſuch a way, as that we might give ſome Teſtimony of our teachable diſpoſitions, and of our obedience by our aſſent to them. *Ut ſermo Evangelii tanquam lapis eſſet Lydius, ad quem ingenia ſanabilia explorarentur*, as the Learned *Grotius* ſpeaks concerning the Doctrine of the Goſpel, whereby God was pleaſed as with a Touch-ſtone to prove and try what kind of tempers men are of, whether they are ſo ingenuous as to accept of ſufficient Evidence, in the confirmation of a holy Doctrine. And the Scripture doth in ſeveral places make uſe of the word *Faith*, according to this notion of it, as it conſiſts in a readineſs of mind to cloſe with and give aſſent unto things upon ſuch evidence as is in it ſelf ſufficient. To which purpoſe is that expreſſion of our Saviour to *Thomas*, *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen and yet have believed*, Joh. 20. 29. Signifying it to be a more excellent commendable and bleſſed thing for a man to yield his aſſent, upon ſuch evidence as is in it ſelf ſufficient, without inſiſting upon more; It denotes good inclinations in men towards Religion, and that they have worthy thoughts of the Divine

Grot. de Verit. lib. 2.

Divine power and goodneſs, when they are willing to ſubmit unto ſuch arguments in the confirmation of a holy doctrine, as to unprejudiced perſons are in themſelves ſufficient to induce belief. It was this diſpoſition that was commended in the *Bereans*, Act. 17. 11 for which they are ſtyled εὐγενέστεροι, more ingenuous, teachable and candid, *more noble* than others, *Becauſe they received the word with all readineſs of mind.* (*i.e.*) Were ready and willing to aſſent to the Goſpel, upon ſuch evidence as was in it ſelf ſufficient to convince reaſonable and unprejudiced men.

And on the other ſide, it was the want of this diſpoſition which is condemned, *Mat.* 13. 58. where 'tis ſaid that our Saviour *did not many mighty works in his own Country, becauſe of their unbelief*: (*i.e.*) That prejudice which there was upon them, by their knowledg of his mean parentage and birth, and their ignorance of his Divine commiſſion and high calling, did indiſpoſe them for an equal judgment of things, and render them unteachable. And having tried this by doing *ſome* mighty works amongſt them, he would not do *many*, becauſe of their incapacity of receiving benefit by them.

Wicked men are in the Scripture-phraſe ſtyled υἱοὶ ἀπειθείας, *filii inſuaſibilitatis*, unper- Eph. 2. 2, 5, 6.

perſwadable men, ſuch as no reaſon can convince. And elſe-where they are ſtyled ἄλογοι, which we tranſlate unreaſonable men. But the word may ſignifie abſurd, contumacious perſons, who are not to be fixed by any Principles, whom no *Topics* can work upon, being directly oppoſite to this vertue of Faith, as appears by the next clauſe, *For all men have not Faith.*

Col. 3. 6. 2 Theſ. 3. 2. ἄλογοι.

Suppoſing Mankind to be endowed (as all other things are) with a natural principle, whereby they are ſtrongly inclined to ſeek their own preſervation and happineſs; and ſuppoſing them to be *rational* and *free* Creatures, able to *judg* of, and to chuſe the means conducing to this end: Nothing can be more reaſonable in this caſe, than that ſuch Creatures ſhould be under the obligation of accepting ſuch evidence, as in it ſelf is ſufficient for their conviction.

6. *When there is no ſuch evident certainty, as to take away all kind of doubting; in ſuch caſes, a judgment that is equal and impartial muſt incline to the greater probabilities.* That is no juſt ballance, wherein the heavieſt ſide will not preponderate. In all the ordinary affairs of life men uſe to guide their Actions by this Rule, namely, to incline to that which is moſt probable and likely, when they cannot attain to any clear unqueſti-

6.

queſtionable certainty. And that man would be generally counted a fool who ſhould do otherwiſe. Now let it be ſuppoſed, that ſome of the great Principles in Religion, ſhould not ſeem to ſome men altogether ſo evident as to be wholly unqueſtionable, yet ought their aſſent ſtill to incline to the greater probability.

When it is ſaid to be a duty for men to believe any thing, or to acquieſce in ſuch kind of Evidence as is ſufficient for the proof of it: The meaning is not, as if there were any moral obligation upon the *Underſtanding*, which is proper only unto the *Will*; but the meaning is, That men ſhould be careful to preſerve their minds free from any wilful prejudice and partiality, that they ſhould ſeriouſly attend to, and conſider the Evidence propoſed to them, ſo as to take a juſt eſtimate of it. For though it be true, that the judgments of men muſt by a natural neceſſity, preponderate on that ſide where the greateſt Evidence lies; ſuppoſing the mind to be equally diſpoſed, and the ballance to be juſt; yet muſt it withal be granted to be a particular virtue and felicity to keep the mind in ſuch an equal frame of judging. There are ſome men, who have ſufficient abilities to diſcern betwixt the true difference of things;

but what through their vicious affections and voluntary prejudices, making them unwilling that ſome things ſhould be true; what through their inadvertency or neglect to conſider and compare things together, they are not to be convinced by plain Arguments; not through any inſufficiency in the *evidence*, but by reaſon of ſome defect or corruption in the *faculty* that ſhould judg of it. Now the neglect of keeping our minds in ſuch an equal frame, the not applying of our thoughts to conſider of ſuch matters of moment, as do highly concern a man to be rightly informed in, muſt needs be a vice. And though none of the Philoſophers (that I know of) do reckon this kind of *Faith* (as it may be ſtyled), this teachableneſs and equality of mind in conſidering and judging of matters of importance, amongſt other *intellectual virtues*; yet to me it ſeems, that it may juſtly challenge a place amongſt them; and that for this reaſon, becauſe the two extremes of it by way of *Exceſs* and *Defect*, I mean the aſſenting unto ſuch things upon inſufficient Evidence (which is called *Credulity*, and the not aſſenting unto them upon ſufficient Evidence, which is called *Incredulity* or *unbelief*, are both of them Vices.

Now

Now where the *Exceſs* and *Defect* do make Vices, or ſuch things as ought not to be, there the *Mediocrity* muſt denote ſomething that ought to be, and conſequently muſt be a Virtue, and have in it the obligation of Duty.

7. *If in any matter offered to Conſideration, the probabilities on both ſides be ſuppoſed to be equal*: (In this caſe, though an impartial judgment cannot be obliged to incline to one ſide rather than to the other, becauſe our *Aſſent* to things muſt by a Neceſſity of Nature, be proportioned to our *Evidence* for them; And where neither ſide doth preponderate, the ballance ſhould hang even) *Yet even in this caſe, men may be obliged to order their Actions in favour of that ſide, which appears to be moſt ſafe and advantageous for their own intereſt.* Suppoſe a man travelling upon the Road to meet with two doubtful ways, concerning neither of which he can have any the leaſt probability to induce him to believe that one is more like to be the true way to his journey's end, than the other; only he is upon good grounds aſſured, that in one of theſe ways he ſhall meet with much trouble, difficulty, danger, which the other is altogether free from: In this caſe, though a man be 7.

not bound to believe that one of them is a truer way than the other, yet is he obliged in prudence to take the ſafeſt.

Nay I add further, If the probabilities on the one hand ſhould ſomewhat preponderate the other, yet if there be no conſiderable hazard on that ſide which hath the leaſt probability, and a very great apparent danger in a miſtake about the other: In this caſe, prudence will oblige a man to do that which may make moſt for his own ſafety.

Theſe are thoſe preparatory Principles which I thought fit to premiſe, as a neceſſary foundation for any debate with captious men about theſe firſt grounds of Religion. And they are each of them (I think) of ſuch perſpicuity, as to need little more than the bare *Propoſal* of them, and the *Explication* of their Terms, to evince the truth of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Exiſtence of a Deity, *and the Arguments for it. The* I. *Argument, From the univerſal conſent and agreement of Mankind; and the Objections anſwered.*

THeſe things being premiſed, I betake my ſelf to that which was at firſt propoſed as the chief deſign of this Book, namely, to prove *the Reaſonableneſs and the Credibility of the Principles of Natural Religion.*

By *Religion*, I mean that general habit of Reverence towards the Divine nature, whereby we are inabled and inclined to worſhip and ſerve God after ſuch a manner as we conceive moſt agreeable to his will, ſo as to procure his favour and bleſſing.

I call that *Natural Religion*, which men might know, and ſhould be obliged unto, by the meer principles of *Reaſon*, improved by Conſideration and Experience, without the help of *Revelation.*

This doth comprehend under it, theſe three principal things:

1. A belief and an acknowledgment of the Divine Nature and Exiſtence.

2. Due apprehenſions of his Excellencies and Perfections.

3. Suitable Affections and Demeanour towards him.

Concerning each of which I ſhall treat in order.

I. There muſt be a firm belief of the Divine Nature and Exiſtence. *Primus eſt Deorum cultus, Deos credere*, ſaith *Seneca*. Heb. 11. 6. Anſwerable to that of the Apoſtle, *He that comes to God, muſt believe that he is.* Now that this is a point highly credible, and ſuch as every ſober rational man, who will not offer violence to his own faculties, muſt ſubmit unto, I ſhall endeavour to evince by the plaineſt Reaſon.

In treating concerning this Subject, which both in former and later times hath been ſo largely diſcuſſed by ſeveral Authors, I ſhall not pretend to the invention of any new arguments, but content my ſelf with the management of ſome of thoſe old ones, which to me ſeem moſt plain and convincing. Namely, from

1. The Univerſal conſent of Nations, in all places and times.

2. The

2. The Original of the World.

3. That excellent contrivance which there is in all natural things.

4. The Works of Providence in the Government of the World.

1. From the Univerſal Conſent of Nations in all places and times, which muſt needs render any thing highly credible to all ſuch as will but allow the human nature to be Rational, and to be naturally endowed with a Capacity of diſtinguiſhing betwixt Truth and Falſhood.

It is laid down by the * *Philoſopher* as the proper way of Reaſoning from *Authority*, That what ſeems true to *ſome* wiſe men, may upon that account be eſteemed *ſomewhat* probable; what is believed by *moſt* wiſe men, hath a *further* degree of probability; what *moſt men*, both wiſe and unwiſe, do aſſent unto, is yet *more* probable: But what *all men* have generally conſented to, hath for it the higheſt degree of evidence of this kind, that any thing is capable of: And it muſt be monſtrous arrogance and folly for any ſingle perſons to prefer their own judgments before the general ſuffrage of Mankind.

* *Ariſtot. Top.*

It is obſerved by *Ælian*, That the notions concerning the Exiſtence and Nature of

Var. Hiſt. lib. 2. c. 31.

of God, and of a future ſtate, were more firmely believed, and did uſually make deeper impreſſion upon the *illiterate Vulgar*, who were guided by the more ſimple dictates of Nature, than upon ſeveral of the *Philoſophers*, who by their art and ſubtilty were able to invent diſguiſes, and to diſpute themſelves into doubts and uncertainties concerning ſuch things as might bring diſquiet to their minds.

That all Nations of men now do, and have formerly owned this Principle, may appear both from preſent experience, and the Hiſtory of other Times and Places. And here I might cite abundance of the beſt Authors that are extant, concerning the truth of this in all other Ages and Nations. But for brevity's ſake I ſhall mention only two, *Tully* and *Seneca*. *Quæ gens eſt, aut quod genus hominum, quod non habeat ſine doctrinâ, anticipationem quandam Deorum, quam appellat προλήψιν Epicurus.* 'What kind of men are there any 'where, who have not of themſelves this 'prenotion of a Deity? And in another place: *Nulla gens eſt, neque tam immanſueta neque tam fera, quæ non etiamſi ignoret qualem habere Deum deceat, tamen habendum ſciat.* 'Amongſt all mankind 'there is no Nation ſo wild and barbarous, who

Nat. Deor. lib. 1. 32.

De Legib. lib. 1.

'who though they may miſtake in their due 'apprehenſions of the nature of God, do 'not yet acknowledg his being. And elſe-where: *Nulla eſt gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit Deorum timor.* 'There is no Nation 'ſo immenſely barbarous and ſavage, as not 'to believe the exiſtence of a Deity, and 'by ſome kind of ſervices to expreſs their 'adoration of him. So *Seneca*, *Nulla gens uſquam eſt, adeo extra leges moreſq; projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat.* 'There 'is no where any Nation ſo utterly loſt to 'all things of Law and Morality, as not to 'believe the exiſtence of God.

Tuſc. Qu. lib. 1.

Epiſt. 118.

He that ſhall traverſe over all this habitable Earth, with all thoſe remote corners of it, reſerved for the diſcovery of theſe later Ages, may find ſome Nations without Cities, Schools, Houſes, Garments, Coin; but none without their God. They may, and do vaſtly differ in their Manners, Inſtitutions, Cuſtoms: But yet all of them agree in having ſome Deity to worſhip.

And beſides this Univerſality as to *Nations* and *Places*, it hath been ſo likewiſe as to *Times*. Religion was obſerved in the beginning of the World, before there were Civil Laws amongſt men, I mean any other than the meer wills of their Princes and Governours. The

The Works of *Moſes* are by general conſent acknowledged to be the moſt ancient Writings in the world. And though the deſign of them be to preſcribe Doctrines and Rules for Religion, yet there is nothing offered in them by way of proof or perſwaſion concerning the *Exiſtence of God*; but it is a thing taken for granted, as being univerſally acknowledged and believed. Nor do we read that any of the other Ancient Law-givers or founders of Commonwealths, who thought fit to preſcribe Rules for the *Worſhip* of God, have endeavoured to perſwade the people concerning his *Being*; which yet had been moſt neceſſary, if any doubt or queſtion had then been made of it; as being the very foundation of Religion, and a diſpoſition ſo requiſite to qualifie men for Society and Government.

And as it hath been thus in former times, ſo is it now amongſt the Nations more lately diſcovered, and not known to former Ages. 'Tis excellently ſaid by *Tully*, *Opinionum commenta delet dies, Naturæ judicia confirmat:* That time wears out the fictions of Opinion, and doth by degrees diſcover and unmask the fallacy of ungrounded perſwaſions, but confirms the dictates and ſentiments of Nature;

De Nat. Deorum, lib. 2.

ture; and 'tis a good ſign that thoſe Notions are well eſtabliſhed which can endure the Teſt of all Ages.

There are two things may be objected againſt this Argument.

1. That there is no ſuch Univerſal Conſent as is pretended.

2. If there were, This would ſignifie but little, becauſe it may as well be urged for *Polytheiſm* and *Idolatry*.

1. That there is no ſuch Univerſal Conſent as is pretended, Becauſe there are ſome Nations in the world ſo wild and ſavage, as not to acknowledg any Deity; which by ſeveral Hiſtorians is reported of the *Cannibals* in *America*, and the Inhabitants of *Soldania* in *Africk*, who are ſo ſottiſh and groſly ignorant, that they differ very little from Brutes, having ſcarce any thing amongſt them of *Civil Policy*, and nothing at all of *Religion*, or any publick Aſſemblies for Worſhip: Beſides ſuch particular perſons, pretending to Learning and Philoſophy, as in ſeveral Ages have openly aſſerted, and profeſſedly maintained Atheiſtical Principles, as *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, *Pherecides*, and others are ſaid to have done.

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To this it may be ſaid, that ſuppoſing theſe reports to be true, There may almoſt in all kinds be ſome few inſtances, beſides and againſt the general courſe of things, which yet can no more be urged as prejudices againſt the common and moſt uſual order belonging to them, than Prodigies may to prove, that there is no Regularity in the Laws of Nature. Is there any Equity or the leaſt colour of Reaſon in this? For a man to take an Eſſay of the nature of any *ſpecies* of things from ſuch particular inſtances, as in their kinds are monſtrous? Becauſe beaſts may ſometimes be brought forth with five legs, and it may be two heads, is it reaſon therefore to conclude, that no other ſhape is natural to their kind? *Specimen naturæ cujuſlibet, a naturâ optimâ ſumendum eſt*, (ſaith *Tully*) The Eſſay of any kind is rather to be taken from the beſt and moſt uſual, than from the worſt and moſt depraved part of it. Will it therefore follow, that Honey is not naturally ſweet to our taſte, becauſe a ſick palate doth not judg it to be ſo? Such diſſolute perſons, as are altogether immerſed in ſenſuality, whereby they have beſotted their judgments, cannot be looked upon as the moſt competent inſtances of what belongs to Humane nature.

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Where there is either a defect of reaſon, or a groſs neglect in exciting a mans natural faculties, or improving his reaſon, by a due conſideration of ſuch conſequences as do moſt naturally reſult from it: In ſuch caſes, it cannot otherwiſe be expected, but that he muſt come ſhort of that knowledg which he is naturally capable of, and ſhould have, were it not for theſe defects.

Some men are born blind, or have loſt their ſight, will it hence follow, that there is no ſuch thing in nature as Light or Colour? Others are Lunaticks or Ideots, ſhould any man from hence infer, that there is no ſuch thing as Reaſon? No man may raiſe any doubt from ſuch inſtances as theſe, but he that will make it a ſerious Queſtion, Who are the mad men, whether thoſe in *Bedlam*, or thoſe out of it? Whether Ideots are not the wiſeſt of men, and all others the veryeſt fools, according as they are at the wideſt diſtance from them? Can that man be thought to need any further confutation or purſuit, who is forced to fly to ſuch a retreat?

As for thoſe inſtances of *particular perſons*, whom ſtories deliver down to us, as being *profeſſed Atheiſts*, it may be ſaid.

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1. 'Tis plain, that ſome of theſe were counted Atheiſts and Deſpiſers of Religion, becauſe they did endeavour to confute the ſopperies of the Heathen worſhip, and deny the Sun and Moon, and the ſeveral Idols that were adored in their Countries, to be true Gods: The looſe and vitious *Poets*, having ſo far debaucht the underſtandings of the Vulgar, in thoſe darker ages, as to make them believe vile and filthy things of their Gods, unſuitable to all Principles of ſobriety and common reaſon. Upon this, ſeveral men, who were more judicious and virtuous than others, thought themſelves obliged to reclaim the people from ſuch miſchievous ſopperies: In order to which, beſides the more ſerious arguments which they made uſe of, they did likewiſe by jeers and ſcoffs endeavour to render theſe vitious Deities contemptible, and to deride them out of the world. And for this were they by the fooliſh ſuperſtitious multitude counted *Atheiſts*, which was the caſe of *Anaxagoras*, *Socrates*, and others.

2. Let it be ſuppoſed, that ſome men have declared a disbelief of the Divine nature in general; yet as there have been always ſome *monſters* amongſt men, in reſpect of their *Bodies*, ſo may there be likewiſe

wiſe in reſpect of their *minds*. And this no prejudice to the ſtanding laws of Nature. And beſides it ought to be conſidered, that the ſame ſtories which mention ſuch perſons as profeſt Atheiſts, do likewiſe give an account of divers ſignal judgments, whereby they were witneſſed againſt from Heaven.

3. But I add further, There never yet was any ſuch perſon, who had any full and abiding conviction upon his mind, againſt the Exiſtence of God. *Mentiuntur qui dicunt ſe non ſentire eſſe Deum, nam etſi tibi affirment interdiu, noctu tamen & ſibi dubitant.* "They lye who ſay that they be-"lieve there is no God (ſaith *Seneca*) "though they may profeſs this ſomewhat "confidently in the day-time, when they "are in company, yet in the night and a-"lone they have doubtful thoughts about "it. 'Tis their *wiſh*, but not their *opinion*. The intereſt of their guilt doth make them deſire it. But they are never able with all their endeavours wholly to extinguiſh their natural notions about it. Witneſs thoſe continual fears and terrors, whereunto ſuch kind of men are above all others moſt obnoxious.

The ſecond *Objection* was, That if the conſent of Nations be a ſufficient evidence

to prove the *Exiſtence of God*, it may as well prove *Polytheiſm* and *Idolatry*, for which the like conſent may be pleaded.

To this two things may be anſwered:

1. Though the *Unity* of the Godhead, and the unfitneſs of worſhipping him by *Idols*, be diſcoverable by the light of nature; yet theſe things are not ſo *immediate*, and ſo obvious to every ones underſtanding as the *Being* of God is, but will require ſome deeper conſideration, and ſome skill in the rules of reaſoning. Now it could not be reaſonably expected, that either the generality, or any conſiderable number of the Vulgar, ſhould attain to ſuch a degree of knowledg as their own natural reaſon, duly exerciſed and improved, might have furniſhed them with. Partly by reaſon of the *prejudice of Education*, which muſt needs incline them to acquieſce in what is delivered down to them, as the *belief* or *practice* of their Forefathers; and conſequently hinder them from an impartial enquiry into the nature of things: But chiefly for want of *ſufficient leiſure* to apply themſelves to the buſineſs of contemplation, by reaſon of their being immerſed in the affairs of the World, either pleaſures, ambition, riches, or elſe being wholly taken up with cares, about providing the ne-

neceſſaries of life for themſelves and their families; which muſt needs much divert them, from the ſerious conſideration of things, and hinder them from the improvement of their natural light to all the due conſequences of it.

2. The moſt conſidering and the *wiſeſt* men in all Ages and Nations, have conſtantly differed from the *Vulgar* in their thoughts about theſe things, believing but one ſupreme Deity, the Father of all other ſubordinate Powers:

——*Hominum ſator atq; Deorum.*

Whom they called *Jupiter* or *Jove*, with plain reference to the *Hebrew* name *Jehovah*. And to this one God did they aſcribe ſeveral names, according to thoſe ſeveral virtues they ſuppos'd to be in him, or benefits they expected from him. *Bacchus*, and *Neptune*, *Nature*, *Fortune*, *Fate*: *Omnia quidem Dei nomina ſunt, varie utentis ſuâ poteſtate*, ſaith *Seneca*. So likewiſe *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *&c.* And they adviſe men, to worſhip this God not ſo much by *Images*, or by *Sacrifices*, as by inward goodneſs, by endeavouring to be like him; as I ſhall ſhew more largely afterwards. Now though the opinion of the *Vulgar*, with the conſent of the *Wiſe*, may be of great Authority; yet being ſeparated

De Benefic. lib. 4. c. 7.

from or especially opposed unto, their opinion, who are best able to judg, it must needs signifie but little.

If the question should here be proposed, How comes it to pass, that mankind should thus consent and agree in the notion of a Deity, and to what ground or cause may it be ascribed?

To this I shall suggest something by way of answer, both *Negatively*, and *Positively*.

1. *Negatively*, from what hath been said it may appear, that this belief doth not proceed from any particular *infirmity*, or *occasional prejudice* in the judgment, because it hath been so constant and universal amongst Mankind. And besides, there is not the least probability for those things which are assigned as the grounds of this Prejudice, namely, *Fear*, *Policy*, *Stipulation*.

1. Not *Fear*, or a certain jealousie of the worst that may happen. For though it must be granted natural to the minds of men, to be possessed with an awe towards such things as are able to hurt them; yet 'tis much more probable, that the fear of a supreme Being, is rather the consequence and *Effect* of such a belief, than the *Cause* of it. For this reason, Because the Notion of a Deity doth comprehend under

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it infinite *Goodneſs* and *Mercy*, as well as *Power* and *Juſtice*; and there is no reaſon why *Fear* ſhould diſpoſe a man to fancy a Being that is infinitely *Good* and *Merciful*.

2. Not *Policy* or the device of Statiſts, to keep mens Conſciences in awe and oblige them to ſubjection. 1. Becauſe the greateſt Princes and Politicians themſelves, have in all ages been as much under this conviction of a Deity, and the laſhes of Conſcience, as any other perſons whatſoever; which could not be, had they known this buſineſs of Religion to have been a device or ſtate engine, whereby their Subjects were to be impoſed upon. 2. Becauſe this belief is amongſt the more rude and ſavage Nations, ſuch as in all other regards are ignorant and wild and utterly deſtitute of all common Policy.

3. Not *Stipulation* or mutual agreement, for the ſame reaſon; Becauſe 'tis amongſt thoſe barbarous and ſavage people, who decline all kind of commerce with others. Nor is it imaginable, how ſuch kind of perſons ſhould agree together to promote any opinion, who are wildly ſeparated from one another, by Seas, and Mountains, and Deſarts; and yet not at ſo great a diſtance in their

Habitations, as in their Cuſtoms and Manners.

From all which it may appear, That this *Opinion* or *Belief* which is ſo *general* amongſt men, doth not ariſe from any prejudice or partiality upon their minds; But rather the *doubting* or *queſtioning* of theſe things, which *belongs but to few*. There is reaſon enough to believe, that *this* may be founded in prejudice. Nor is it difficult to determine whence their prejudice doth ariſe, namely, from the vitious inclinations of men, which will corrupt and byaſs their judgments. When once men are immerſed in ſenſual things, and are become ſlaves to their Paſſions and Luſts, then are they moſt diſpoſed to doubt of the Exiſtence of God. Whereas on the contrary, the more juſt and honeſt any man is, the more willing and careful he is to walk up to the dictates of his natural light, by ſo much the more firmely are ſuch perſons convinced of this Truth. 'Tis the Conſcience of Guilt which makes it the Intereſt of ſome that there ſhould be no God. And conſequently being deſirous to have it ſo, this makes them ſtudious how to find out ſome doubt and obſcurity about it.

2. *Affirmatively.* It is a known Rule, *That*

That the Cauſe muſt be as univerſal as the Effect is. If this belief have been *one* and *conſtant* in all places and times, then muſt the cauſe of it be ſo likewiſe. And what is there imaginable that hath a fairer pretence to this, than the very *nature of our minds*, which are of ſuch a frame as in the ordinary exerciſe of their faculties, will eaſily find out the neceſſity of a ſupreme Being. And it ſeems very congruous to reaſon, that he who is the great Creator of the world, ſhould ſet ſome ſuch mark of himſelf upon thoſe Creatures that are capable of worſhipping him, whereby they might be led to the Author of their Being, to whom their worſhip is to be directed; as is obſerved in a late *Diſcourſe*, wherein there are many other things to this purpoſe. *The wiſdom of being Religious.*

Such kind of Notions as are *general* to mankind, and not confined to any particular Sect, or Nation, or Time, are uſually ſtyled κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι, Common Notions, λόγοι σπερματικοὶ, Seminal Principles; and *Lex nata*, by the *Roman Orator*, an innate Law, in oppoſition to *Lex ſcripta*, and in the Apoſtles phraſe, the *Law written in our hearts.* Which kind of Notions, though they are of themſelves above all other matters moſt plain and perſpicu-

ous, yet becauſe Learned men do ſomewhat differ in their apprehenſions concerning the firſt riſe and original of them, I ſhall therefore take this occaſion to ſuggeſt briefly, that which to me ſeems the moſt eaſie and natural way for the explaining of this, namely, by comparing the inward ſenſation of our minds and underſtandings, with that of our outward ſenſes.

It hath been generally agreed upon, and we find it by ſufficient experience, that the acts of our minds are reducible to theſe three kinds.

1. Perception of ſuch ſingle objects as are propoſed to them, which is called *ſimple Apprehenſion*.

2. Putting together ſuch ſingle objects, in order to our comparing of the agreement or diſagreement betwixt them, by which we make Propoſitions, which is called *Judging*.

3. The diſcerning of that connexion or dependance which there is betwixt ſeveral Propoſitions, whereby we are enabled to infer one Propoſition from another, which is called *Ratiocination*, or Diſcourſe.

Now as there is an univerſal agreement in the ſenſation of outward objects; The

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Eye and the *Ear* of all ſenſitive Creatures, having the ſame kind of perception of *viſible* and *audible* things. Thoſe things which appear Green, Blew, or Red to one, having the ſame appearance to all others. So muſt it be with the underſtandings of men likewiſe, which do agree in the ſame kind of Perception or ſimple Apprehenſion of intelligible objects.

And as in making of Propoſitions, or compounding our Apprehenſions about ſenſible things, we determine that the Green in this object is like the Green in that other, and unlike the Yellow or Blew in a third; That it is more, or leſs, or equal, to ſomething elſe, with which we compare it: So likewiſe is it for compounding other ſimple notions belonging to the underſtanding, By which we judg one thing to be like or unlike, agreeable or diſagreeable, equal, or more or leſs, in reſpect to ſomething elſe compared with it.

Now thoſe kind of Apprehenſions wherein all men do agree, theſe are called *natural Notions.* And of this kind are all thoſe Opinions which have in them ſuch a ſuitableneſs to the minds of men, as to be generally owned and acknowledged for true, by all ſuch as apply their thoughts to the conſideration of them.

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As for ſuch Doctrines as depend meerly upon inſtitution and the inſtruction of others, men do frequently differ both from themſelves, and from one another about them; becauſe that which can plant, can ſupplant. If meer inſtitution be able to fix ſuch opinions, it may be able to unſettle them again. Whereas no kind of inſtitution will be ſufficient to eradicate theſe natural notions out of the minds of men.

But now, though the underſtanding have naturally this power belonging to it, of *Apprehending*, and *Comparing*, and *Judging* of things; yet is it not to be expected, either from Infants or from dull ſottiſh people, or from ſuch as are deſtitute of all the advantages of Education, that they ſhould improve this natural ability, to all the due conſequences of it. But in order to this, 'tis neceſſary that men ſhould firſt be out of their Non-age, before they can attain to an actual uſe of this Principle. And withal, that they ſhould be ready to exert and exerciſe their faculties to obſerve and conſider the nature of things, to make uſe of that help which is to be had, by the inſtruction and experience of thoſe with whom they converſe. Nor can this be any juſt exception againſt the

the naturalneſs of ſuch notions, that they are promoted by the experience and inſtruction of others; Becauſe mankind is naturally deſigned for a Sociable life, and to be helpful to one another by mutual converſation. And without this advantage of diſcourſe and converſation, whereby they communicate their thoughts and opinions to one another, it could not otherwiſe be, but that men muſt needs be ſtrangely ignorant, and have many wild and groſs apprehenſions of ſuch things as are in themſelves very plain and obvious, and do appear ſo to others.

For the better underſtanding of this, let us ſuppoſe a perſon bred up in ſome deep Cavern of the Earth, without any inſtruction from others, concerning the ſtate of things in this upper ſurface of the World: Suppoſe this perſon, after he is arrived to a mature age, to be fetched up from this ſolitary abode, to behold this habitable World, the Fields, and Towns, and Seas, and Rivers, the various revolutions of Seaſons, together with the beautiful Hoſt of Heaven, the Sun, and Moon, and Stars: It could not otherwiſe be, but that ſuch a Perſon muſt at firſt view have many wild imaginations of things. He might conceive thoſe uſeful and

and beautiful contrivances of Houſes and Towns, to ſpring up and grow out of the Earth, as well as Trees; or elſe that Trees were made and built by men, as well as Houſes. But ſuppoſing him to be a man, he muſt be endowed with ſuch a natural faculty, as upon further conſideration and experience will quickly ſatisfie him, That one of theſe was *natural*, and the other *artificial*; And that the buildings were framed to that elegance and convenience by the Art and Skill of men.

It would not at firſt ſeem credible to him, that a large Tree ſhould proceed from a ſmall Seed or Kernel: That an Egg ſhould produce a Bird. And as for Man himſelf, he would not be able to have any conception of his true Original; how it could be poſſible, that a young Infant ſhould be bred in his Mothers womb, where it ſhould continue for ſo many months incloſed in a bag of water, without breathing; yet upon experience theſe things would appear to him unqueſtionable, and of *Natural Evidence*.

From what hath been ſaid, it will follow, That ſuch things are evident by *natural light*, which men of a mature age, in the ordinary uſe of their faculties, with the common help of mutual Society, may know

know and be ſufficiently aſſured of, without the help of any ſpecial Revelation. And when it is ſaid that the Notion of God is natural to the ſoul, the meaning of it is, That there is ſuch a faculty in the ſoul of man, whereby upon the uſe of reaſon he can form within himſelf a ſetled notion of ſuch a firſt and ſupreme Being, as is endowed with all poſſible perfection. Which is all I ſhall ſay as to this firſt Argument. I ſhall be briefer in the reſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

2. Arg. *From the* Original *of the* World.

NOthing can be more evident, than that this visible frame which we call the World, was either from all *eternity*, or else that it had a *beginning*. And if it had a beginning, this must be either from *Chance* or from some *wise Agent*. Now if from clear Principles of Reason, it can be rendered more credible, that the world had a beginning, and that from some wise Agent, This may be another Argument to this purpose.

Dr. *Tillotson's* I. Sermon.

I cannot here omit the mention of a late Discourse, wherein this subject hath been so fully treated of, that I shall need to say the less of it, having little that is material to add to what is there delivered.

In the discussing of this, I shall purposely omit the mention of those arguments which relate to *Infinity*, as being not so easily intelligible, and therefore more apt to *puzzle* and amuse, than to

to *convince*. Let it be ſuppoſed, that each of the two Theories, whether about the *Eternity* of the World, or its having a *Beginning*, are not impoſſible, and that neither of them does imply a contradiction. And further, that neither of them can be infallibly demonſtrated by the meer principles of Reaſon. In this caſe the queſtion muſt be, which of them is moſt credible.

He that would rationally fix his opinion and belief about this matter, hath but theſe two kind of Proofs to enquire after.

1. *Teſtimony*, or the Tradition of the moſt Antient times.

2. *Reaſon*, or ſuch Probabilities as do ariſe from the nature of the thing.

For the firſt of theſe Opinions, concerning the Eternity of the World, there is very little to be ſaid from either of theſe.

1. As to *Teſtimony*. *Ariſtotle*, who was a great Patron of this Opinion, and held that the world was a neceſſary Emanation from God, as light is from the Sun; doth of himſelf acknowledg, that the Philoſophers before him, were of opinion that the world had a beginning; which acknowledgment of his, is no ſmall prejudice to the Autority of his opinion, as *De Cœlo* lib. 1. c. 10.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſhew afterwards. And then,

2. As to *Reaſon*, It is a meer precarious *Hypotheſis*, having no ſufficient argument that I know of, to render it probable.

But now for the other Opinion, namely, the beginning of the World, there are as fair and convincing proofs for it, of ſeveral kinds, as the nature of the thing is well capable of.

1. From Tradition. If the world were made and had a beginning, it is but reaſonable to expect, that ſo memorable a thing as this, ſhould be recorded in ſome of the moſt ancient Hiſtories; And that ſome extraordinary means ſhould be uſed to perpetuate the memory of it, and to convey it down from one generation to another by Univerſal Tradition: And if it ſhall appear, that all the evidence of this kind is for this opinion, This muſt needs render it highly credible.

Now the *Hiſtory* of *Moſes*, hath been generally acknowledged, to be the moſt ancient Book in the world, and always eſteemed of great Autority, even amongſt thoſe Heathens who do not believe it to be divinely inſpired: And there is no man of learning, but muſt allow to it (at leaſt) the ordinary credit of other ancient Hiſtories; eſpecially, if he conſider what ground

ground there is for the Credibility of it, from the Theology of the darker times, which is made up of ſome imperfect Traditions and alluſions, relating to thoſe particular ſtories which are more diſtinctly ſet down in the writings of *Moſes*.

Now *Moſes* doth give ſuch a plain, brief, unaffected account of the Creation of the world, and of the moſt remarkable paſſages of the firſt ages, particularly of the plantation of the world by the diſperſion of *Noah*'s Family, ſo agreeable to the moſt antient Remains of Heathen Writers, as muſt needs very much recommend it to the belief of every impartial man.

Though the *Jews* were but a ſmall Nation, and confined to a narrow compaſs in the world; yet the firſt riſe of Letters and Languages is truly to be aſcribed to them. It is atteſted by ſeveral of the beſt and moſt Antient Heathen Writers, that the *Hebrew* Alphabet, or (which is all one) the *Phœnician*, is that from which both the *Greek* and the *Latin*, and conſequently the generality of the reſt now known, are derived, ſo *Herodotus*, *Plutarch*, *Pliny*, *Curtius*, *Lucan*, *&c.* From whence it may be probably infer'd, that the account given by the firſt Language, is the moſt ancient, and therefore the moſt

likely to be a true Account of the firſt Original of things.

The uſual courſe obſerved by all Nations to preſerve the memory of things moſt remarkable, which might otherwiſe in tract of time be forgotten, eſpecially amongſt ſuch as are not acquainted with Letters, hath been by ſome *practical Inſtitution*, as by appointing ſome *Feſtival* for the Commemoration of ſuch things. And thus likewiſe hath it been in the preſent caſe; The *Sabbath* (as *Moſes* expreſly tells us) was inſtituted for this very purpoſe, to keep up the memory of the Creation. And though perhaps it may be difficult to prove, that this day hath upon this Account been obſerved by any other Nation, but the *Jews*; yet the diviſion of Time by Weeks, hath been univerſally obſerved in the world, not only amongſt the *Civiliz'd*, but likewiſe amongſt the moſt *Barbarous* Nations. And there being no foundation in nature for this kind of diſtribution of days, It muſt therefore depend upon ſome antient general Tradition, the original whereof, together with the particular reaſon of it, is preſerv'd in the moſt ancient of all other Hiſtories, *viz.* that of *Moſes*.

As for the derivation of this from the ſeven

ſeven Planets, whoſe names have been anciently aſſigned to them; this being well conſidered, will appear to be ſo far from invalidating what I now aſſert, that it will rather contribute to the Probability of it.

It is commonly believed, that the aſſignation of the names of the Planets to the days of the week, was by the *Chaldeans*, who were much devoted to Aſtrological devices, and had an opinion that every hour of the day was governed by a particular Planet, reckoning them according to their uſual order, *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Mars*, *Sol*, *Venus*, *Mercury*, *Luna*; That Planet which was aſcribed to the firſt hour, giving name to the whole day; ſuppoſing *Saturn* to belong unto the firſt hour of *Saturday*, then the ſecond hour will belong to *Jupiter*, the third to *Mars*, &c. and according to this order, the fifteenth hour will belong likewiſe to *Saturn*, and ſo will the twenty-ſecond, the twenty-third to *Jupiter*, the twenty-fourth to *Mars*; and ſo the firſt hour of the next day muſt belong to *Sol*, which muſt accordingly give the denomination to that day; and ſo for the other days of the week.

Now if it may appear, that in this very

account, which all ſorts of Learned men do agree in, there is ſuch a ſpecial regard to the *Jewiſh Sabbath*, or *Seventh-day*, as cannot be pretended for any other, This will ſtill render it more credible, That the Tradition of the Sabbath did precede theſe Aſtrological Names: If we ſuppoſe theſe Aſtrologers to reckon from the firſt day of the Creation, and to begin with the moſt noble Planet the *Sun*; Then the Seventh-day will be *Saturday*, or the *Jewiſh* Sabbath: Or (which is more probable) if we ſuppoſe them to begin their computation, from the firſt day after the Creation was finiſhed, and from the higheſt Planet, of ſloweſt motion, and ſo more proper to ſignifie a day of reſt; According to this way of Computation, there is a peculiar priviledg belongs to the *Jewiſh* Sabbath, which cannot be ſaid of any of the other days.

The Teſtimony of greateſt Antiquity next to the Books of *Moſes*, muſt be ſought for amongſt thoſe Ancient Nations, the *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans*, *Phenicians*, from whom the *Grecians* derived their Learning, and amongſt whom the firſt and moſt famous Philoſophers of *Greece* were wont to travel, for the improving of their knowledg; It being probable that ſome Memo-

Memorials might be preſerved amongſt thoſe ancient Nations, concerning the firſt beginning of things; and that they were acquainted with what was the Univerſal Tradition of the firſt Ages. Upon which account, thoſe *Grecian* Philoſophers before *Ariſtotle*, ſuch as *Thales*, *Anaxagoras*, *Pythagoras*, &c. who by their travel were converſant amongſt theſe Nations, muſt by this advantage be more competent Judges than he was, concerning the general belief and opinion of former times, and what grounds they had for it.

Now it is well known to have been a general Tradition amongſt theſe Nations, That the World was made, and had a beginning. And though there be ſome prodigious accounts amongſt them, which may ſeem inconſiſtent with the Writings of *Moſes*, as namely that of the *Chaldeans*, who reckon Forty-three thouſand years from the beginning of the World to the Time of *Alexander:* yet this way of Computation is acknowledged by *Diodorus Siculus* and *Plutarch*, to be meant of *Lunary* years, or Months; which being reduced to *Solary* years, will fall out to be much about the time aſſigned by *Moſes* for the Creation.

But beſides theſe Teſtimonies of the Ancient Nations, and the firſt *Grecian* Philoſophers who converſed amongſt them; This hath been likewiſe believed and profeſſed by the moſt eminent Writers ſince, *Socrates*, and *Plato*, and *Tully*, and *Seneca*, and the generality of the reſt, whether *Philoſophers* or *Poets*, of greateſt repute for their Learning, who have aſſerted, That God was the Maker of the World.

There are ſeveral paſſages to this purpoſe amongſt thoſe ancient *Greek* Poets, *Linus*, *Heſiod*, *Orpheus*, *Epicharmus*, *Ariſtophanes*, which relate to the Creation of the World; and *Ovid* particularly, who fetched his matter from the *Grecian* Writers, doth give ſuch a plain deſcription of it, as if he had been acquainted with the Books of *Moſes*; in thoſe known *Verſes*:

Metam. lib. 1. *Ante mare & terras, & quod tegit omnia cœlum*, &c.

Nor hath it been thus only amongſt the more civilized Nations; But the Barbarous *Indians* likewiſe have owned this Tradition, and profeſſed the belief of it. Now it is not eaſie to imagine, how any ſuch Tradition could ariſe ſo *early*, and ſpread ſo *univerſally*, if there were not a real ground for it. As

As for the Arguments from *Reaſon*, I would offer theſe things to conſideration:

1. If the World had been either without a beginning, or elſe very old, much older than the time aſſigned for it in the Hiſtory of *Moſes*; 'Tis not likely, but there ſhould be ſome kind of Memorials of thoſe former Ages, or ſome real Evidence that there had been ſuch. *Quis dubitet, quin Mundus recens ac novus ſit, cum Hiſtoria Græca, bis mille annorum hiſtoriam vix contineat?* ſaith *Macrobius*. *The World cannot be very old, becauſe the Grecian Hiſtory doth ſcarce extend to Two thouſand years.* This was that which convinced *Lucretius*, that the World could not be Eternal, Becauſe there were ſuch obſcure footſteps or reliques in any credible ſtory, either amongſt the *Grecians* or *Romans*, concerning any Perſons that lived, or any conſiderable Action that was done, much before the *Trojan Wars*. Saturnal. lib. 1.

2. The firſt riſe and progreſs of Arts and Sciences in the world, may likewiſe afford another fair probability to this purpoſe. *Seneca* aſſerts, that there was not above a thouſand years ſince the beginning of Arts and Sciences, to the time wherein he lived. There is ſcarce any one of them ſo Ancient, but that the Origi-

nal and first Inventors of them are recorded in Story. Nor is there any Nation in the world, now accounted Civil, but within the memory of Books, were utterly rude and barbarous. Now it is not imaginable, that so sagacious, so busie a Creature as Mankind is, could all of them have lived an infinity of Ages, destitute of those Arts, so advantageous for the comfort and benefit of human life, without some successful attempts for the supplying of their wants by them.

If it be said, That it is *possible* there might have hapned many general Inundations, by which former Inventions might be lost and forgotten, and such a kind of simplicity introduced into the world, as is proper to the first and ruder Ages of it. To this, I have shewed before, That a meer possibility to the contrary, can by no means hinder a thing from being highly Credible. To which I shall presently add something further.

3. If the World had been eternal, How comes it to pass, that it is not every-where inhabited and cultivated? How is it, that very probably a considerable part of it is yet unknown? It is not yet two hundred years since, that one half of that which is now known lay undiscovered. Whereas

if

if we judg of its beginning by the preſent Plantations and fulneſs of it, according to thoſe proportions wherein men and families are now multiplied, allowing for ſuch kind of Devaſtations, by War, Famine, Peſtilence, Inundations, as are recorded in Credible Story to have hapned in former times; I ſay according to this, it will appear highly credible, that the beginning of the world was much about the time mentioned by *Moſes* for the Creation of it; whereas had it been Eternal, it muſt long ere this have been over-ſtocked, and become too narrow for the Inhabitants, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the addition but of one man every year. Nay, though we ſuppoſe but the addition of one man for every thouſand years, yet long before this time there ſhould have been a far greater number than there could be ſands in the earth, though the whole Globe were made up of nothing elſe.

If it be ſaid, That there may have been great checks given to the encreaſe of mankind by Wars, Famines, Peſtilences, and Inundations.

To this it may be replied, That either theſe extraordinary devaſtations of mankind, muſt fall out regularly, ſo as not to be

be too much or too little; and in this caſe, they muſt be ordered by ſome Wiſe Agent, which is God; or elſe they muſt be purely Caſual; And then it is by no means credible, but that the world muſt long ere this have been wholly waſted, and left deſolate of Inhabitants, or elſe frequently too much repleniſhed.

But the moſt plauſible ſhift againſt the force of this argument, is fetched from the inſtance of *Noah*'s Flood, by which the whole world was deſtroyed, exceepting one Family. The like whereto may frequently have hapned before, when perhaps one only Family did eſcape, and thoſe ſuch ignorant perſons, as could give no true account of what was before.

But neither will this ſhift ſerve the turn. Becauſe no man can give any rational account, how 'tis poſſible that ſuch a general Flood ſhould come, by any *natural* means. And if it be *ſupernatural*, that grants the thing I am proving, namely ſuch a *Supreme Being* as can alter the courſe of nature? But let it be ſuppoſed *natural*, How comes it to paſs that ſo much as one Family doth eſcape. Such kind of Deluges, as muſt prevent the over-ſtocking of the world, muſt be neceſſary once every ten or twenty thouſand years. And there

there must have happened many millions of them, from all eternity. And who shall take care for the adjudging of them to their proper season? or for preventing the total destruction of mankind? Though we should grant this possible casualty, yet he who can believe that to be a *probable* casualty which hath never come to pass in an eternal duration, must not pretend to be an enemy to Credulity.

By what hath been said it may appear, that there is a very great advantage in the proofs for this opinion, concerning the *beginning of the world*, above the other for the Eternity of it.

Now for the *Difficulties* on each side: Those relating to the Eternity of the world, have been already discussed, in the proofs I have lately insisted upon. And as for the Opinion, concerning the Creation of it, the chief difficulty which *Aristotle* doth mention, is from that Principle of his, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, which is generally acknowledged to be true concerning natural Generations, but must not necessarily be extended to supernatural productions. It is one of the natural notions belonging to the Supreme Being, to conceive of him that he is Omnipotent. And it is very reasonable for us to believe, that our finite under-

underſtandings cannot comprehend the utmoſt extent of Omnipotence. And though the making of ſomething out of nothing do argue an inconceivable power, yet there is no contradiction in it. And if ſuch things muſt be denyed which our reaſons cannot comprehend, we muſt then deny that any thing can be ſelf-exiſtent, which yet is and muſt be ſuppoſed, on both ſides; It being altogether as difficult for us to conceive, how *any thing ſhould be of it ſelf*, as how *any thing ſhould be made of nothing*. So that this difficulty is not ſufficient to overthrow this opinion, and withal it doth extend equally to both ſides.

So then if it do appear, that betwixt theſe two *opinions* the leaſt and feweſt difficulties do lye, on that ſide which hath the plaineſt and ſtrongeſt proofs, There is no queſtion to be made, which way every impartial man will determine his opinion.

I do not pretend that theſe Arguments are *Demonſtrations*, of which the nature of this thing is not capable: But they are ſuch ſtrong probabilities, as ought to prevail with all thoſe, who are not able to produce greater probabilities to the contrary.

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As for that other *Opinion*, concerning *Epicurus* his Atoms, It is ſo extravagant and irrational, and hath been ſo abundantly confuted by others, that I cannot think it expedient to ſpend any time in the diſcuſſing of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

3. Arg. *From the admirable contrivance of Natural things.*

3. FROM that *excellent Contrivance* which there is in all natural things. Both with reſpect to that Elegance and Beauty which they have in themſelves ſeparately conſidered, and that regular Order and ſubſerviency wherein they ſtand towards one another; together with the exact fitneſs and propriety, for the ſeveral purpoſes for which they are deſigned. From all which it may be inferred, that theſe are the productions of ſome Wiſe Agent.

The moſt Sagacious man is not able to find out any blot or error in this great volume of the world, as if any thing in it had been an imperfect eſſay at the firſt, ſuch as afterwards ſtood in need of mending: But *all things continue as they were from the Beginning of the Creation.*

Tully doth frequently inſiſt upon this, as the moſt natural reſult from that beauty and regularity to be obſerved in the Univerſe. *Eſſe præſtantem aliquam, æternamq;*

De divinatione, lib. 2.

namq; naturam, & eam ſuſpiciendam adorandamq; hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi ordoq; rerum cæleſtium cogit confiteri. "The great elegance and order of "things in the world, is abundantly e- "nough to evince the Neceſſity of ſuch an "eternal and excellent Being, to whom "we owe adoration. And in another place, *Quid poteſt eſſe tam apertum, tamq; perſpicuum, cum cœlum ſuſpeximus, cæleſtiaq; contemplati ſumus, quàm aliquod eſſe Numen præſtantiſſimæ mentis, quo hæc regantur.* "What can be more obvious "than to infer a ſupreme Deity, from that "order and government we may behold "amongſt the heavenly Bodies? De Natur. Deor. lib. 2

The ſeveral viciſſitudes of *Night* and *Day*, *Winter* and *Summer*, the production of *Minerals*, the growth of *Plants*, the generation of *Animals* according to their ſeveral *Species*; with the Law of *natural inſtinct*, whereby every thing is inclined and enabled, for its own preſervation: The gathering of the Inhabitants of the Earth into Nations, under diſtinct Policies and Governments; thoſe advantages which each of them have of mutual Commerce, for ſupplying the wants of each other, are ſo many diſtinct arguments to the ſame purpoſe.

I can-

I cannot here omit the obſervations which have been made in theſe later times, ſince we have had the uſe and improvement of the *Microſcope*, concerning that great difference which by the help of that doth appear, betwixt *natural* and *artificial* things. Whatever is *Natural* doth by that appear, adorned with all imaginable *Elegance* and *Beauty*. There are ſuch inimitable gildings and embroideries in the ſmalleſt ſeeds of Plants, but eſpecially in the parts of Animals, In the head or eye of a ſmall Fly: Such accurate order and ſymmetry in the frame of the moſt minute creatures, a *Louſe* or a *Mite*, as no man were able to conceive without ſeeing of them. Whereas the moſt curious works of Art, the ſharpeſt fineſt Needle, doth appear as a blunt rough bar of iron, coming from the furnace or the forge. The moſt accurate engravings or emboſsments, ſeem ſuch rude bungling deformed works, as if they had been done with a Mattock or a Trowel. So vaſt a difference is there betwixt the skill of *Nature*, and the rudeneſs and imperfection of *Art*.

And for ſuch kind of Bodies, as we are able to judg of by our naked eyes, that excellent contrivance which there is in the ſeveral parts of them; their being ſo commodiouſly

modiouſly adapted to their proper uſes, may be another argument to this purpoſe. As particularly thoſe in *humane bodies*, upon conſideration of which, *Galen* himſelf, no great friend to Religion, could not but acknowledg a Deity. In his Book *de Formatione Fœtus*, he takes notice, that there are in a humane body above 600 ſeveral *Muſcles*, and there are at leaſt ten ſeveral Intentions, or due Qualifications, to be obſerved in each of theſe; Proper figure, juſt magnitude, right diſpoſition of its ſeveral ends, upper and lower Poſition of the whole, the inſertion of its proper Nerves, Veins, and Arteries, which are each of them to be duly placed; ſo that about the *Muſcles* alone, no leſs than 6000 ſeveral ends or aims are to be attended to. The *Bones* are reckoned to be 284; the diſtinct ſcopes or intentions in each of theſe, are above forty, in all about 100000. And thus is it in ſome proportion with all the other parts, the *Skin*, *Ligaments*, *Veſſels*, *Glandules*, *Humors*; But more eſpecially with the ſeveral *members* of the Body, which do in regard of the great variety and multitude of thoſe ſeveral intentions required to them, very much exceed the *Homogeneous* parts. And the failing in any one of theſe, would cauſe an

irregularity in the Body, and in many of them, ſuch as would be very notorious.

And thus likewiſe is it in proportion with all other kinds of Beings; *Minerals*, *Vegetables*: but eſpecially with ſuch as are *Senſitive*; *Inſects*, *Fiſhes*, *Birds*, *Beaſts*; And in theſe yet more eſpecially, for thoſe *Organs* and *Faculties* that concern *ſenſation*; But moſt of all, for that kind of frame which relates to our *underſtanding power*, whereby we are able to correct the errors of our Senſes and Imaginations, to call before us things paſt and future, and to behold things that are inviſible to Senſe.

Now to imagine, that all theſe things, according to their ſeveral kinds, could be brought into this regular frame and order, to which ſuch an infinite number of Intentions are required, without the contrivance of ſome wiſe Agent, muſt needs be irrational in the higheſt degree.

And then, as for the frame of *Humane nature* it ſelf. If a man doth but conſider how he is endowed with ſuch a *Natural Principle*, whereby he is neceſſarily inclined to ſeek his own well-being and happineſs: And likewiſe with one Faculty whereby he is enabled to judg of the nature of things, as to their fitneſs or unfitneſs

neſs for this end: And another Faculty whereby he is enabled to chuſe and proſecute ſuch things as may promote this end, and to reject and avoid ſuch things as may hinder it. And that nothing properly is his *duty*, but what is really his *intereſt*: This may be another argument to convince him, that the Author of his Being muſt be infinitely Wiſe and Powerful.

The wiſeſt man is not able to imagine how things ſhould be better than now they are, ſuppoſing them to be contrived by the Wiſeſt Agent; And where we meet with all the Indications and Evidences of ſuch a thing as the thing is capable of, ſuppoſing it to be true, It muſt needs be very irrational to make any doubt of it.

Now I appeal unto any conſidering man, unto what cauſe all this exactneſs and regularity can be reaſonably aſcribed, Whether to Blind *Chance*, or to Blind *Neceſſity*, or to the conduct of ſome Wiſe Intelligent Being.

Though we ſhould ſuppoſe both *Matter* and *Motion* to be Eternal, yet is it not in the leaſt credible, that inſenſible Matter could be the Author of all thoſe excellent Contrivances which we behold in

theſe natural things. If any one ſhall ſurmize, that theſe Effects may proceed from the *Anima Mundi*; I would ask ſuch a one, Is this *Anima Mundi* an Intelligent Being, or is it void of all perception and reaſon? If it have no kind of ſenſe or knowledg, Then 'tis altogether needleſs to aſſert any ſuch principle, becauſe Matter and Motion may ſerve for this purpoſe as well. If it be an Intelligent Wiſe Eternal Being, This is *GOD*, under another Name.

As for *Fate* or *Neceſſity*, this muſt needs be as blind and as unfit to produce wiſe effects, as *Chance* it ſelf.

From whence it will follow, That it muſt be a Wiſe Being that is the Cauſe of theſe Wiſe Effects.

By what hath been ſaid upon this ſubject, it may appear, That theſe viſible things of the world are *ſufficient to leave a man without excuſe*, As being the *Witneſſes of a Deity*, and ſuch as do plainly *declare his great Power and Glory*.

Rom. 1. 20
Acts 14. 17.
Pſal. 19.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

4. Arg. *From Providence, and the Government of the World.*

4. FROM the Works of *Providence* in the Government of the world; And that continual experience which we have of ſome Wiſe and Powerful Being, who doth preſide over and govern all things; Not only by his general concourſe, in preſerving all kinds of things in their Beings, and regulating them in their Operations: But chiefly in his wiſe and juſt government over mankind and humane affairs, which may appear by ſuch *effects* as are { *Ordinary*, *Extraordinary*.

1. For the more *common* effects of it, namely that general ſucceſs which in the ordinary courſe of things doth accompany honeſt and virtuous actions: And the puniſhment and vengeance that doth one time or other in this world uſually befall ſuch as are wicked: Both Virtue and Vice being generally, and for the moſt part, ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed by Rewards and Puniſhments in this life. There

There are indeed ſome inſtances to the contrary, concerning the Miſeries of Good men, and the Proſperity of the Wicked; But theſe have been by ſeveral of the wiſeſt *Heathen*, *Plato*, *Plutarch*, *Tully*, *Seneca* &c. ſufficiently vindicated, by the cleareſt Principles of Reaſon, from being any prejudice to the wiſe Government of Providence.

It is not either Neceſſary or Convenient, that Happineſs and Proſperity in this Life, which is the uſual reward of Virtue, ſhould have either ſuch a *Phyſical* or *Mathematical Certainty*, as could not poſſibly fail. Becauſe,

1. It would not be conſiſtent with our dependent conditions, that worldly proſperity ſhould be ſo infallibly under the power of our own endeavours, as that God himſelf might not ſometimes interpoſe for our diſappointment. If I may have leave to ſuppoſe, what I am now proving, namely a Wiſe and Omnipotent Providence, It muſt needs appear highly reaſonable, that it ſhould be left to his Infinite Wiſdom and Power, to make what reſerved caſes he pleaſes, from the ordinary courſe of things. From whence it will follow, that theſe unequal diſpenſations can be no ſufficient ground for the diſbelief of Providence.

2. It

2. It would very much prejudice another great Principle of Religion, which is of mighty influence for the regulating of mens lives and actions in this world, namely, the Belief and Expectation of a future ſtate of Rewards and Puniſhments.

3. If temporal proſperity did infallibly attend all good actions, This would be a diminution to Virtue it ſelf. Men would do good by a kind of natural neceſſity, which would abate juſt ſo much from the Virtue of their Actions, as it does from the Liberty of them. It is ſufficient, that *Moral Actions* ſhould have *Moral Motives*. And that Virtue doth generally and for the moſt part, make men proſperous and happy in this world. We know by experience, that all Mankind do in their moſt weighty affairs, think it ſufficient to depend upon ſuch cauſes as do commonly and for the moſt part prove effectual to the ends for which they are deſigned. So that this very thing which is uſually looked upon as the greateſt *objection againſt* Providence, is really and truly an *argument for it*.

2. For *extraordinary* effects of it. If we give any credit to the univerſal Hiſtory of all Ages and Nations, It will by that appear,

1. That there have many times happened ſuch ſpecial ſignal Providences for the *puniſhing* of obſtinate ſinners, and for the *deliverance* of ſuch as were Religious, in anſwer to their Prayers, whereby the Supreme Governour of the World hath ſo viſibly pointed out his will and meaning, and ſo plainly manifeſted his power, that every impartial man muſt be forced to ſay, *doubtleſs there is a God that judges in the earth.*

2. That ſometimes *Miracles* have been wrought, which could not be effected without the help of ſome Superior Power; And ſometimes there have been plain propheſies and predictions concerning ſuch future things, as in their various circumſtances were contingent. Of which the *Annals* of all Ages and Nations, as well Heathens as Chriſtians, do give very particular and large accounts. And though we may ſafely grant, that ſome of the ſtories to this purpoſe, delivered either from the more *ancient* or *later* times, were fabulous and vain; yet for a man to deny that ever ſuch things happened in the world, but that they were all meer forgeries and deſigns to cheat Poſterity, this were to ſubvert the Credit of all Hiſtory; which is ſo immodeſt a thing,

as

as any ſober man would be aſhamed of.

Theſe arguments are more largely diſcuſſed by others, who have writ upon this ſubject: But there is one particular which to me ſeems very conſiderable to this purpoſe, though but little notice of it be taken by others: And that is, The ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Nation, who for theſe 1600 years have been driven out of their own Countrey, having now no particular place of abode, belonging to them as a Nation; but are ſcattered and diſperſed over all the habitable world, hated and deſpiſed where-ever they are permitted to dwell; very frequently perſecuted, impoveriſhed, baniſhed, murdered in vaſt multitudes; And notwithſtanding all this, they are not yet ſo mixed and blended with other Nations, as to be loſt amongſt them; But are ſtill kept up a diſtinct people, There being no inſtance like this in any ſtory. As if they were intended for a ſtanding memorial and example to the world, of the divine power and vengeance. To me it ſeems, amongſt rational arguments one of the plaineſt, not only for the proof of a Deity, and a juſt Providence in purſuing that Nation with ſuch exemplary Vengeance; But likewiſe for the autority of Scripture,

and

and the truth of the Christian Religion.

I might here add another argument to the same purpose, from *Natural Conscience*, which is Gods Deputy, and doth *internally* witness for him, as other creatures do *externally*. 'Tis plain, that all mankind are in some measure endowed with this; and one may as well assert, that Hope and Fear are not natural to men, as that Conscience is not. To this purpose I might further argue, from those natural notions of our minds concerning *Good* and *Evil*, the bounds of which are fixed in the nature of things, and do not depend either upon *Custom* or *Positive Law*. Those things which have in them a fitness to promote our chief end, being styled *Good*, and implying in the very Definition of them, *Comeliness* and *Reward*; Those things which have in them a natural aptitude to hinder our Chief end being styled *Evil*, and implying in the definitions of them, *Turpitude* and *Punishment*. From whence it will follow, that there must be some Superior Power, who by framing things with such respects towards one another, may be said to have declared this Law of Nature, and to have taken care to enforce the observance of it;

it; both theſe belonging to the nature of a Law. But I may perhaps have occaſion to ſpeak more particularly to this afterwards.

Theſe things put together, are ſo ſtrong an evidence, and ſo ſufficient to convince the exiſtence of a Deity, that *that* man muſt be very wilful, who doth not ſubmit and acquieſce in it. And for this reaſon is it (ſaith a *Noble Author*) that God never yet wrought any Miracle to convince an *Atheiſt*; becauſe to a man that is capable of being convinced, his ordinary works are ſufficient to this purpoſe. And I ſhould think it much more eaſie and rational (ſaith the ſame *Author*) to believe all the fables in the *Poets*, the *Legend*, the *Talmud*, and the *Alchoran*, than that this Univerſal Frame ſhould be without a Creator and Governour. L. Bacon. Eſſays.

And now it may not be improper to look back, and take a review of what kind of Evidence hath been produced in this matter. As for any *immediate proof* from our *outward ſenſes*, this cannot be pretended to for the demonſtration of ſuch a Being as is ſuppoſed to be a pure Spirit and inviſible; But for the *mediate* proofs from the effects of a Wiſe Omnipotent Agent, we can look no where about us, But every

every object doth afford evidence of it. There is no concluſion in Philoſophy (not immediately apparent to the ſenſe) that is capable of ſo full and unqueſtionable an evidence from plain *effects*, as this.

As for that kind of *Inward Senſation*, whereby we can diſcern the impreſſions of our own minds, They that have any ſenſe of a Law written in their hearts, or any natural notions about Good and Evil, muſt by theſe effects be convinced of a Supreme Being. And as for that kind of Evidence which belongs to our Underſtandings, If the Univerſal conſent of mankind be of any autority: If this Viſible world, repleniſhed with ſuch admirable variety of Creatures, preſerved and governed in ſuch an excellent order, be any evidence of Infinite Power and Wiſdom: If beſides what we our ſelves have known by our own experience, any credit be to be given to Univerſal Hiſtory, atteſting to many Signal Providences that have happened in the world: Beſides the ſeveral Miracles and Propheſies, that have been taken notice of in ſeveral Ages and Nations. I ſay if any, or all of theſe things be of any force, they muſt needs render the thing I am proving to be credible in the higheſt degree, and even altogether unqueſtionable.

In

In ſo much, that if a Deity be ſuppoſed, It is not imaginable by what other kind of evidence we ſhould be aſſured of it, than what we are now furniſhed withall. And it was before laid down as a Principle, *That when a thing is capable of good proof in any kind, men ought to reſt ſatisfied in the beſt evidence for it which that kind of things will bear, and beyond which better could not be expected ſuppoſing it were true.* Chap. 3. Prop. 3.

If any ſhould imagine, that frequent Miracles might be a more powerful means to convince men of this Principle. To this it may be ſaid,

1. That this is not *fitting*: the proper work of Miracles being for the confirmation of ſuch doctrines as are not knowable by natural light, not for ſuch things of which men may be ſufficiently convinced by reaſon.

2. 'Tis not ſo certain, that this would be *effectual*. Thoſe frequent Miracles in the paſſage of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, The dividing of the Red-ſea, The waters out of the Rock, The cloud and pillar of Fire, The Mannah, The Quails, The deſtruction of *Korah*, &c. did not prevail with the generality of the *Iſraelites*. Thoſe conſtant Miracles under the *Moſaical* diſpenſation;

ſation; The waters of Jealouſie; The extraordinary plenty of the ſixt year; The Urim and Thummim; The ſpecial Protection of the Coaſts of *Iſrael* every third year, when all the Males were to go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip; which cuſtom of theirs muſt needs be known to their enemies, who lived round about them: None of all theſe, did prove effectual for the conviction of obſtinate men. Thoſe occaſional Miracles wrought by our Saviour, though they were ſo many and ſo great, as were never before wrought by any one, yet did they not prevail with many of the *Jews*.

If it be ſaid, That none of theſe proofs do ſo infallibly conclude, but that there doth ſtill remain a *Poſſibility* that the thing may be otherwiſe. To this I have ſhewed before, That there may be an *indubitable* Certainty, where there is not an *infallible* Certainty: And that a *meer poſſibility* to the contrary, is not a ſufficient cauſe of doubting. To which I now add, That if it ſhould be ſuppoſed, that a man could not be ſure of the Being of God, Yet 'tis moſt evident that he could not be ſure of the contrary: For this plain reaſon, Becauſe no man can be ſure of a *Pure Negative*, namely, That ſuch a thing is not; unleſs

Prop. 4.

unleſs he will either pretend, to have a certain knowledg of all things that are or may be, than which nothing can be more monſtrouſly and ridiculouſly arrogant; or elſe, unleſs he be ſure that the being of what he denies doth imply a contradiction, for which there is not the leaſt colour in this caſe; The true notion of God conſiſting in this, *That he is a Being of all poſſible perfection.*

If it be ſuppoſed, that notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid, there may yet be ſome probabilities to the contrary. To this it may be anſwered, That unleſs theſe probabilities were greater and ſtronger than thoſe on the other ſide, no man who acts rationally will incline to them. And if there be any ſuch, why are they not produced? where are they to be found?

If men ſhall yet pretend, That though they cannot anſwer theſe Arguments, yet they do really find ſome doubt in their own minds. I would ask ſuch, Have you ſeriouſly and impartially conſidered, what is alledged in this caſe? It ſhould be no prejudice to any Propoſition in Philoſophy or Mathematicks, that an ignorant man who never applied his thoughts to ſuch things, doth pretend to doubt of it. If you do in ſome meaſure underſtand, and have conſidered

ſidered theſe arguments, I would then ask, Have you not as much reaſon for this, as you your ſelves would think ſufficient, for the proof of any thing you were not unwilling to believe? Do you not knowingly and wilfully entertain prejudices againſt ſuch things? Have you been true to ſo much light as you have received? Or have you not rather with-held it in unrighteouſneſs? If ſo, 'tis plain that you have diſhoneſt minds, that you meaſure by an unjuſt balance, and therefore cannot be competent judges of truth or falſhood.

If it be ſuppoſed yet further, that the Probabilities on each ſide ſhould be equal, or that thoſe on the other ſide ſhould ſomewhat preponderate; yet if there be no conſiderable hazard on that ſide which hath the leaſt probability, and a very great and moſt apparent danger in a miſtake about the other: In this caſe, every rational and prudent man is bound to order his actions in favour of that way which appears to be moſt ſafe and advantageous for his own intereſt; as I have ſhewed before. Prop. 7.

So that in ſuch caſes, as may ſeem unto us not altogether free from ſome kind of doubt, and which we could not ſo far clear

clear up to our ſelves, as to make them appear wholly unqueſtionable; I ſay, in ſuch caſes, men that would act prudently, ſhould enquire, Where lies the danger of miſtaking?

Why, on the one ſide, All the inconvenience of Believing this (if it be not ſo), will be, that we are hereby occaſioned to tye our ſelves up to ſome needleſs reſtraints during this ſhort time of our lives, wherein notwithſtanding there is as to the *preſent*, much peace, quiet, and ſafety; And as for the *future*, our error ſhall dye with us, there being none to call us to an account for our miſtake.

But now on the other ſide, what if there ſhould be a Deity ſo holy, and juſt, and powerful, as is ſuppoſed? If this ſhould prove to be a real truth (and no man can be ſure of the contrary), what vengeance and indignation may ſuch vile Miſcreants and Traitors expect, who have made it their buſineſs to baniſh *Him* out of the world, who is the great Creator and Governour of it, to undermine his Being, to eradicate all notions of Him out of the minds of men; To provoke his Creatures and Vaſſals to a contempt of Him, a ſlighting of his fear and worſhip, as being but ſuch imaginary *Chimæra's* as are fit only

to keep fools in awe? Certainly, as this is the higheſt provocation, that any man can be guilty of, ſo ſhall it be puniſhed with the ſoreſt vengeance.

There are two things that *Atheiſtical* men propoſe to themſelves by their prophane looſe principles, namely, to avoid the imputation of Credulity, and the fears and perplexities of mind, to which Religion makes men obnoxious. But their *principles* are not more *irrational*, than their *deſign* is *fooliſh*; for of all mankind theſe prophane perſons are,

1. The moſt *Credulous*, who can believe themſelves to be wiſer than all the world, who can believe the Eternity of the world, or its production by a caſual concourſe of Atoms, without any kind of argument for it, againſt the many reaſons that are urged to the contrary. Who if they ſhould demean themſelves about matters of the world, as they do about Religion, would be counted ridiculous, ſenſeleſs perſons, and altogether unfit for humane converſation.

Natura Deor. lib. 1. c. 86.

2. The moſt *Timorous*. *Tully* hath obſerved, that no kind of men are more afraid of God, than ſuch as pretend not to believe his Being. Theſe are the men who above all others are moſt liable to be affected with dread

dread and trembling, at thunder and lightning, at ſolitude and darkneſs, and more eſpecially then when it doth moſt concern them to be freed from ſuch diſquiets, namely, in the time of ſickneſs, and the approaches of death.

From whence it will follow, that upon all accounts *Atheiſm* may juſtly be accounted *Folly*; both as it is directly contrary to the principles of *reaſon*, and the rules of *wiſdom*.

I have now done with the *firſt* thing required to a ſtate of Religion, namely, *A belief and an acknowledgment of the Divine Nature and Exiſtence.*

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Excellencies and Perfections of the Divine Nature: And First, of those which are commonly called Incommunicable, *namely*, Simplicity, Unity, Immutability, Infiniteneſs, { Immenſity, Eternity.

I Proceed to the ſecond thing propoſed as a principal part of Natural Religion, namely, *Due apprehenſions of the Divine Excellency and Perfections.* Without which, the meer belief of his Being, will contribute but little to a true ſtate of Religion. A man may have ſuch unworthy notions of a Deity, that it would in ſome reſpects be as good, nay much better, to be without a *God*, than to have ſuch a one, as he may frame. "It would
Lord Bacons Eſſays. "be better (ſaith a great *Author*) to have "no opinion of God, than ſuch a one as "is unworthy of him; the one is but "meer *unbelief*, the other is *contumely*. 'Tis a common ſaying cited out of *Plutarch*'s book of Superſtition, where he profeſſeth it much more deſirable to him, that poſterity ſhould ſay, that there never was any ſuch man as *Plutarch*, rather than

than that he was a fierce, unconſtant, revengeful man, one who upon the leaſt omiſſion of any ſmall circumſtance towards him, by men otherways virtuous and worthy, would tear out their hearts, deſtroy their families and children, blaſt their fields, ſpoil their cattel with lightning and thunder. This would be ſuch a repreſentation as would make the notion and remembrance of him hateful; And it were better to be forgotten, than to be remembred with infamy. Now there are ſome opinions which do thus reproach the Deity, and render him under ſuch a notion, that if the *Gyants* had prevailed in their attempt againſt heaven, that place had not been worſe ſupplied. This therefore ought to be moſt carefully avoided.

Whereas the Divine nature is ſuppoſed to be the firſt and ſupreme Good, therefore the *Idea* of all abſolute perfection muſt be eſſential to the notion of him. And though it be very difficult for us to raiſe our minds to any due apprehenſions of this; yet we muſt endeavour in our thoughts of him, ſo far as our finite underſtandings are capable, to remove and ſeparate from him whatever is in any kind evil or unworthy, and to aſcribe unto him the utmoſt degree of all Goodneſs and Perfection.

The moſt general Notion that men have of God, is that He is the *firſt cauſe*, and a *Being of all poſſible Perfection.*

Some of his principal Excellencies diſcoverable by the light of Nature, may be reduced to theſe Heads; namely, ſuch as are

- *Incommunicable*;
  - *Abſolute Simplicity.*
  - *Eſſential Unity.*
  - *Immutability.*
  - *Infiniteneſs*, both in reſpect of *Place* and *Time.*
    - *Immenſity.*
    - *Eternity.*
- *Communicable*; belonging either to the Divine
  - *Underſtanding*,
    - *Knowledg.*
    - *Wiſdom.*
    - *Particular Providence.*
  - *Will*, namely, his
    - *Goodneſs.*
    - *Juſtice.*
    - *Faithfulneſs.*
  - *Faculties of Acting*, his
    - *Power.*
    - *Dominion over us in this life.*
    - *Diſtributing of future Rewards and Puniſhments.*

Each

Each of these *Attributes* are upon this account of very great consequence to be believed and considered, because they are the *foundations* of those duties of Religion which we owe to him. According as a man apprehends God to be, so must his *esteem* be of him, and his *demeanour* towards him.

And whereas these great and necessary points, of so much influence to Religion, have been usually treated of by others either too *largely*, by the inserting of several things less pertinent; or too *obscurely*, by offering such proofs concerning them as are less intelligible, or intermixing the discourses about them, with such niceties as are neither very easie to be solved, nor material for men to know: I shall therefore in this place endeavour to avoid both these inconveniences, by treating concerning each of them with all imaginable *brevity* and *plainness*: Observing this method.

First, I shall endeavour to *explain* and describe, what is meant by each Attribute; And then *prove*, that these Attributes so explained, must belong to the natural notion of God. Which I shall make out, both by the *consent* of the wisest *Heathen*, expressed by their declared

opinions, and by their general practice ſuitable thereunto: And from the *nature of the things themſelves*; their *congruity* to the principles of Reaſon, and the *abſurdities* that will follow upon the denial of them.

Thoſe are called *Incommunicable* Attributes, which are proper to God alone, and not communicated to any Creature.

The *firſt* of theſe I have propoſed to treat of, is his *Abſolute Simplicity*. By which I mean his freedom from all kind of compoſition or mixture, either of Principles or of Parts: And that this doth belong to the natural notion of the Deity, may be evident,

1. From *Teſtimony* of the *Heathen Philoſophers*, who do generally acknowledg him to be the Firſt Cauſe and the moſt Simple Being, and do frequently ſtyle him *mens pura & ſincera ſegregata ab omni concretione mortali*, &c. And not only *Scripture*, but the very *Heathen* likewiſe do expreſs this Attribute by the ſimilitude of *Light*, amongſt all viſible things the moſt pure and ſimple.

2. From *Natural Reaſon*, by which it will appear, that God cannot be compounded of any Principles, becauſe the principles and ingredients which concur to

to the making of any thing, muſt be antecedent to that thing. And if the divine nature were compounded, it would follow that there muſt be ſomething in nature before him. Which is inconſiſtent with his being the firſt Cauſe.

And here I ſhall take occaſion to ſpeak ſomewhat concerning the *Spirituality* of the Divine nature, as having ſome affinity with this, though it be none of the *incommunicable* Attributes.

I know it hath been ſaid, with confidence enough, that the notion of a *Spirit*, or *immaterial ſubſtance*, doth imply a contradiction; and that there is an utter impoſſibility of any other Being beſides Matter. But though this hath been *ſaid*, yet was it never *proved*, nor can it be, till either a man be able to evince, that the notion of the word *Subſtance*, according to the moſt general uſe of it, (which gives ſignification to words), doth neceſſarily imply *Corporeity*, than which nothing can be more falſe; or unleſs a man ſhall pretend to the certain knowledg and comprehenſion of all things that are or may be, than which nothing can be more *vain*.

What the *Poſitive notion* of a *Spirit* is, is not ſo neceſſary to enquire after, or determine.

termine. 'Tis ſufficient, that we conceive of it by way of *Negation*, namely, that it is a Powerful Intelligent Being that is not *matter*, without figure or parts, not capable of rarefaction or condenſation, not viſible to our bodily eyes, and therefore not to be repreſented by any kind of ſenſible Image: Not ſubject to thoſe neceſſary *Laws of Matter*, which cannot move unleſs it be moved, and cannot but move when impelled by another. I ſay, it may be ſufficient in our apprehending the *Spirituality* of God, to remove all *Corporeity* and *Figure* in our conceptions of him.

Now that this Attribute doth belong to the Divine nature, may be made evident both by *Teſtimony* and by *Reaſon*.

1. It hath been generally owned, by the wiſeſt and moſt learned *Heathen*. *Pythagoras* is often cited for this; by whom (ſaith *Lactantius*) God was wont to be ſtyled *incorporalis mens*, an incorporeal Mind; and by *Plato* frequently ἀσώματος, without a body; by other *Græcian* Philoſophers τὸν κοσμοποιὸν, the *Mind* that made the world. *Plutarch* ſtyles him χωρὶς ὑλης εἶδος, a ſeparated form, not mixed with matter, without any thing in him that is paſſible.

De Ira Dei. cap. 11.

Tuſcul. Qu. lib. 1.

The *Latin* Philoſophers do frequently give him the Attribute of *mens divina*,

mens

mens pura & ſincera, mens ſoluta & libera, ſegregata ab omni concretione mortali.

2. By *Reaſon.* That *Spirituality* is a *Perfection*, and therefore to be aſcribed unto God; or rather, that *Corporeity* is an *Imperfection*, and therefore to be removed from him, may appear from hence. Becauſe the ſuppoſing of him to be *matter* is inconſiſtent with divers of his other moſt Eſſential Perfections; As,

1. His *Immenſity*, If we do ſuppoſe theſe two reaſonable *poſtulata.* 1. That there are ſome other things in the world beſides God. And 2. That two bodies cannot be both at the ſame time in the ſame place. From whence it will follow, that wherever any other Body or matter is, from thence God muſt be excluded; and ſo many *Chaſmes* or breaches muſt there be in the Divine nature.

2. His *Knowledg* and *Wiſdom*, It being not imaginable, how meer matter ſhould be able to comprehend, much leſs to contrive all that variety of things in the world, paſt, preſent, and to come.

3. His *Liberty* and *Freedom*, and conſequently with his *Goodneſs*. That action not being properly good, which is not done freely and out of choice. Now the

the Laws of Matter are *neceſſary*, there can be no ἀυτεξούσιον, or *arbitrary principle* in meer *matter*. And it is worth obſervation, how this very argument puzzled *Epicurus* and his followers, as is repreſented by *Lucretius*. If all material things move by neceſſary Laws, and the parts of Matter be naturally ſo diſpos'd, that they do not move unleſs they be moved, and cannot but move when preſs'd upon by other parts that are in motion; whence comes that *liberty* which we may by an inward ſenſation perceive to be within us?

Unde eſt hæc inquam fatis avolſa voluntas?

To which he gives ſo wild and irrational an anſwer, from the motion of declining Atoms, as doth ſufficiently manifeſt him to be baffled by this Objection.

The ſecond Incommunicable Attribute to be treated of, is the *Eſſential Unity* of the Divine nature. By which I mean, his being *One* and no more. And that this perfection doth belong to the natural notion of God, may be made evident both by *Teſtimony* and by *Reaſon*.

1. By

1. By *Teſtimony.* I have ſhewed before, how that notwithſtanding that *Polytheiſm* which did ſo generally abound amongſt the *Heathen*, yet the wiſer and more conſiderate perſons amongſt them, have in all ages acknowledged *One Supreme Deity.* The *Egyptians* of old, though of all others the moſt infamous for their multiplicity of *Gods*, yet did aſſert *One* Maker and chief Governour of the world, under whom they did ſuppoſe ſeveral ſubordinate *Deities*, who as his *Deputies* did preſide over ſeveral parts of the Univerſe.

The firſt occaſion of theſe *leſſer Deities*, was probably from a deſire that men had, to expreſs their gratitude to, and to honour the memories of, ſuch *Heroical Perſons*, as in thoſe firſt and ruder ages of the World, had either by their *inventions* or their *proweſs*, been highly beneficial to *mankind*, or to their *own Countries*; who thereupon were for ſuch publick ſervices, thought fit to be advanced to the higheſt honour after their deaths, and admitted in a ſubordinate way, to ſome ſhare of Government, eſpecially in taking care of the welfare of their Countries. And to this doth the *Apoſtle* ſeem to allude, 1 *Cor.* 8. 4, 6. where he ſaith, *We know there*

there is no other God but one, for though there be that are called Gods, both in heaven and in Earth, (as there be Gods many, and Lords many): *But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him.*

There are many atteſtations amongſt the *Heathen Writers* concerning this Attribute, the *Unity* of the Godhead. It is obſerved, that *Orpheus* was the firſt amongſt them that wrote concerning the *Genealogy* of the *Gods*, where he reduces them to the number of 360. But he was afterwards ſo ſenſible of this impious folly, that he writes a particular diſcourſe to his ſon *Muſæus*, and his other friends, wherein he doth ſolemnly recant theſe wild abſurd Fables, profeſſing to them, that he thought himſelf obliged to rectifie theſe errors and abuſes, which his former *Poem* might have occaſioned. And here he doth in the firſt place admoniſh them, that there is but one God, of himſelf, and none beſides him; εἷς ἐστι αὐτοφυὴς, by whom all other things are made, and upon whom they depend. And then he goes on to ſhew, that God is inviſible, and yet ſees and knows all things; that as he is merciful, ſo is he juſt, being the Author of thoſe judgments which befal wicked

wicked men, with ſeveral other things to this purpoſe. And though *Homer* do too often follow *Orpheus* in theſe fictions, concerning a multitude of Deities, yet when he is moſt ſerious, he ſuppoſes but one, εἷς κόιρανο ἔσω. So *Sophocles*,

——— εἷς ἔστιν θεὸς,
ὁς οὐρανὸν τέτυχε καὶ γᾶιαν μακρὰν.

There is but one God, who made the Heaven and the Earth.

So *Pythagoras*, and ſeveral others after him, ſtyle God by the name of *Monas* or *Unity*.

It is commonly ſaid, that *Socrates* was put to death for his endeavouring to undeceive his Country-men in that vanity they were addicted to, of worſhipping a multitude of Deities; and that this made the *Writers* after him, more ſhy in ſpeaking their thoughts about this matter: But though *Plato* do in ſome places (for fear of incurring the ſame danger) ſeem to favour this popular error, by defending *Polytheiſm*, yet he acknowledges theſe ſubordinate Deities to be begotten; and he lays it down in another place as a *Principle*, that whatever is begotten is *corruptible*, and therefore incapable of being pro-

properly a God. And (if the 13*th* Epiſtle be truly his), there is a remarkable paſſage in it to this purpoſe, where he gives this note, That in thoſe Epiſtolary diſcourſes, where he deſigns to be more ſerious, he doth mention the name of *God* in the *ſingular* number; but when he is not ſo, then he mentions *Gods* in the *plural*.

Hierocles in his *Comment* upon *Pythagoras golden verſes*, doth ſtyle him Θεὸς Θεῶν, *God of Gods*, the only maker of all things.

Arrian in his *Diſſertations* of *Epictetus*, doth aſſure us, that in his time (which was about 120 years after Chriſt), it was an uſual form in the prayers of the *Heathen*, to ſay, κύριε ἐλέησον, *Lord have mercy upon us*, whereby they did acknowledg the *Unity* of that God whom they did invoke in their prayers. Which *clauſe* is thought to be from that uſage taken into the *Liturgies* of the Chriſtians. So far then as the conſent of the wiſeſt and beſt men, in former times, is of any Autority, ſo far is this Attribute rendered highly credible.

I ſhall only add that remarkable paſ-
Diſſert. 1. ſage in *Maximus Tyrius*: "Though men "differ much in their opinions about other "mat-

"matters, yet in this they all agree, That "there is *one God*, the *King* and *Father* "of all; under whom there are ſubordi- "nate Deities, his offſpring, who are ad- "mitted to ſome ſhare of government with "him. In this the *Grecian* conſents with "the *Barbarian*, the *Inhabitants* of the "*Continent* with the *Iſlanders*, the *Wiſe* "with the *Unwiſe*.

2. But beſides the Teſtimonies to this purpoſe, it may likewiſe be made evident by *Reaſon*, That a *Plurality of Gods* is not only *unneceſſary*, and therefore *improbable*; but that it is ſuch a ſuppoſition as doth imply in it many *inconſiſtencies*, and therefore is *impoſſible*.

1. 'Tis *unneceſſary*, and therefore highly *improbable*. Thoſe have been always eſteemed good Rules, *Fruſtra fit per plura*, &c. *Entia non ſunt multiplicanda ſine neceſſitate*. It is moſt ſuitable to that common analogy to be obſerved amongſt natural things, even in leſſer matters, that there is nothing amongſt them ſuperfluous or redundant; And therefore much more ought it to be ſo, in the greateſt and higheſt matters of all. Now nothing can be more evident, than that *one* infinite Being may be ſufficient to all purpoſes whatſoever; for if it had any *limits*, it were

not *infinite*; and nothing can be more abſurd, than to ſuppoſe more Gods than are neceſſary.

2. 'Tis not *poſſible*, that there ſhould be *two* ſuch *infinite Beings*. Becauſe either they muſt have *ſeveral* Perfections, or the *ſame*: Neither of which is conſiſtent with the moſt obvious notion of God, *That he is a Being of all poſſible Perfections.*

To ſuppoſe two Gods, with *ſeveral Perfections*, ſome belonging to one, and ſome to another, will plainly prove, that neither of them can be *God*, becauſe neither of them have all poſſible Perfections.

To ſuppoſe *two* Gods of the *ſame* and *equal Perfections*, would likewiſe prove, that neither of them can be God, (*i.e.*), not abſolutely perfect; becauſe it is not ſo great a priviledg, to have the ſame equal perfections with another, and in a kind of partnerſhip, as to be alone and ſuperior above all others.

And to ſuppoſe one of them, whether of *ſeveral* or the *ſame kinds* of Perfections with the other, but only in an *inferior degree*, may ſufficiently evince that one of them is not properly God, becauſe not *ſupreme*.

3. The

3. The third *Attribute* to be diſcuſſed, is the *Divine Immutability.* By which I mean a freedom from all kind of *change* or *inconſtancy*, both as to his *Nature* and his *Purpoſes.*

And that this *Attribute* is likewiſe very ſuitable to thoſe natural notions which men have of God, may appear,

1. By *Teſtimony.* *Plato* having propoſed the Queſtion, whether God be mutable and inconſtant, anſwers expreſsly. 'Tis moſt neceſſary that he ſhould be always the ſame and alike. His words are moſt emphatical, ἁπλοῦν ἁπλῶς ἁπλῶς ἀλλοίωσιν ἁπλῆν ἐνδέχεται, that *he is never in any wiſe capable of any kind of change whatſoever.* In *Phæd.*

And in another place, he mentions theſe *two* things, as being the grand principles of Religion. 1. That God is the cauſe of all good, and in no wiſe of any evil. 2. That he is conſtant and immutable, and cannot deceive by making various repreſentations of himſelf. *De Repub.* lib. 2.

So *Seneca*, ſpeaking of the neceſſity of aſcribing this Attribute to the Divine Nature as to his Purpoſes or Counſels, hath this paſſage; *Statuerunt quæ non mutarunt, nec unquam primi conſilii Deos pænitet.* *De Benefic.* lib. 6.

nitet. God is always constant to his own Decrees, and doth never repent of his Purposes. And in another place, *Necesse est ei eadem placere, cui nisi optima placere non possunt; nec ob hoc minus liber ac potens est, ipse enim est Necessitas sua.* *'Tis necessary that he should be always pleased with the same things, who can be pleased with nothing but what is best: Nor can this be any prejudice to his Liberty or his Power, since he is his own Necessity*, i. e. nothing from without, but his own natutural perfection lays this necessity upon him.

Nat. Quæst. 1. *Præf.*

2. By *reason.* There is an excellent argument to this purpose, in that place before-cited out of *Plato*, which according to his manner, he delivers in a more copious way of expression. But the substance of it is this; All change must be either *involuntary* and upon necessity, or *voluntary* and upon choice. Now God being the most *powerful* Being, cannot by any thing be necessitated to an *involuntary* change. And for any *voluntary* change, whereas it must be either for the *better* or the *worse*, it is not imaginable, that any *wise* Being should be willing to change for the *worse*; Nor is it possible that any *perfect* Being should change for the *better*.

And

And therefore 'tis neceſſary that the divine nature ſhould be immutable.

We eſteem changeableneſs in men either an imperfection, or a fault. Their *natural* changes, as to their *perſons*, are from weakneſs and vanity; their *moral* changes, as to their *inclinations* and *purpoſes*, are from ignorance or inconſtancy. And therefore there is very good reaſon, why we ſhould remove this from God, as being that which would darken all his other perfections. *The greater the Divine Perfections are, the greater Imperfection would Mutability be.* Beſides, that it would take away the foundation of all Religion, *Love* and *Fear*, and *Affiance* and *Worſhip*: In which men would be very much diſcouraged, if they could not certainly rely upon God, but were in doubt that his nature might alter, and that hereafter he might be quite otherwiſe from what we now apprehend him to be.

4. *Infiniteneſs* is another Attribute moſt natural to the Notion of God. By which is meant, his not being bounded by *place*, or *ſpace*, or by *duration*, but being *Immenſe* and *Eternal*.

1. This Attribute of Gods *immenſity* doth ſignifie his not being ſo confined by any bounds of *ſpace*, but that he doth

ſpread himſelf to all places that we can ſee or can imagine, and infinitely beyond: So as we cannot ſay, he is here and not there, thus far he reaches and not farther. Some have thought, that it is not abſolutely neceſſary to believe ſuch a kind of *Omnipreſence* of the Divine ſubſtance, as to be actually preſent in every place. But this is moſt neceſſary to be believed, That God is every-where in reſpect of his *Power* and *Providence*, whereby he doth influence and govern all things, (which is hardly poſſible to conceive without his actual preſence in all places) And in reſpect of his *Knowledg*, whereby he doth ſee and take notice of every thing, though never ſo ſecret; and that he can pierce through all theſe created things, with greater facility than the Light doth through the Air. And that this doth belong to the natural notion of God, may appear,

1. By the general conſent of the *Heathen*, teſtified by their praying to him at any place or time, which ſhews that they were perſwaded that he was always and every-where preſent, at leaſt by his *Knowledg* and his *Power*. *Tully* cites *Pythagoras* affirming, *Deum eſſe animum per naturam rerum omnium intentum & commeantem*, That God is a Spirit or Mind, which

De Natur. Deor.

which doth paſs through all things. And in another place, he cites it as *Thales* his ſayiug, which he commends, *Homines exiſtimare oportere, Deos omnia cernere, Deorum omnia eſſe plena*, That *men ought to think, that God beholds every thing, and fills every place.* *Plato* affirms, that God doth ſee and take notice of all our actions, words, and thoughts. So *Virgil*, ——*Jovis omnia plena.* And in another place, *De Legib.* lib. 2. *De Legib.* lib. 10. *Eclog.* 3. *Georg.* lib. 4

——*Deum namq; ire per omnes*
Terrasq; tractusq; maris, cœlumq; profundum.

So *Seneca* ſpeaking of God, ſaith, *Ubiq; & omnibus præſto eſt.* He is every-where, and always at hand. And in another place, *Quocunq; te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi, nihil ab illo vacat, Opus ſuum ipſe implet. We can turn our ſelves no-whither but we ſhall meet him, no place is without him, he fills his own Work.* *Epiſt.* 95. *Benefic.* lib. 4.

2. By the principles of *Reaſon.* If it were otherwiſe, and the Divine nature ſhould be limited, this would contradict his univerſal Providence, and render all worſhip of him vain and uſeleſs. Why

ſhould a man either fear him, or ſerve him, if he could neither hear our prayers, nor take notice of our wants, nor receive our acknowledgments.

2. For the Attribute of *Eternity*, whereby is ſignified Gods being of infinite *duration*, without *beginning* or *end*; that this likewiſe doth belong to the natural notion of God, may be evident,

1. By the general conſent of the *Heathen Philoſophers*. And though there have been diſputes amongſt them, about ſome of his other Attributes, yet in *this* all of them have agreed. They do indeed deſcribe the Genealogies of their *Heroes* and ſubordinate Gods, but for the *ſupreme Deity*, he is conſtantly acknowledged to be without beginning of time or end of days. *Epicurus* himſelf, who had the loweſt and meaneſt opinion of God, and robbed him of as many of his other perfections, as by the utmoſt ſtraining of his wit he was able to do; yet is forced to leave him this *Attribute*. So *Tully* relates of him, ſpeaking to thoſe of that *Sect*, *Ubi igitur veſtrum beatum & Æternum, quibus duobus verbis ſignificatis Deum?* Where is that *bleſſed* and *eternal* Being of yours? which are the

Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

two

two uſual *words* whereby you deſcribe the nature of God? And *Lucretius*, who made it his deſign to repreſent to the world the doctrine of that *Philoſopher*, doth from him give this account of the divine nature,

Omnis enim per ſe Divum natura neceſſe eſt
Immortali ævo ſumma cum pace fruatur.

It is eſſential to the notion of God, that he ſhould be happy and immortal. The *Poets* themſelves, who amongſt all others had the wildeſt thoughts of God, yet do continually give him the Title of Ἄθανατος, and ſeldom mention his name without it. And the *Oath* moſt uſual amongſt them, was in this form, *Deos teſtor immortales*, I appeal to the immortal Gods. *Ariſtotle* doth in ſeveral places, make *Eternity* to be eſſential to the notion of God. And *Tully* aſſerts it impoſſible to conceive of God without this perfection; *Nos Deum niſi ſempiternum intelligere quî poſſumus? How is it poſſible for us to conceive of God, but as being Eternal?* There never yet was

De cœlo. lib. 2.

was any man, that had any conception of God, who did not eſteem him to be Everlaſting. To ſpeak of a God that ſhould be corruptible and mortal, is ſo monſtrous an abſurdity, that a man could not, though he ſhould purpoſely ſtudy for it, deviſe any thing more wild and extravagant, ſaith *Plutarch*.

Againſt *Colotes*.

2. There is very good reaſon, why this *Attribute* ſhould not by the moſt *Sceptical Atheiſtical* men be eſteemed impoſſible, becauſe they themſelves are willing to grant it to the *World*, or at leaſt to *matter*. And if we ſuppoſe God to be the firſt Cauſe or Mover, it will thence neceſſarily follow, that he muſt always be, and could not have a beginning; becauſe if he ever were only in *poſſibility*, he could not from thence paſs into *actual Being*, without ſome precedent Cauſe and Mover, which is inconſiſtent with his Being the *firſt Cauſe*. And if nothing could cauſe his Being, then nothing can take it away, and conſequently he muſt be Everlaſting.

It would be a great abatement to all the other Divine perfections, if they were finite and periſhing. Beſides, that it would be altogether inconſiſtent with ſome

ſome of them, namely, his *Self-exiſtence*, and *neceſſary Exiſtence*. And withall, it muſt needs take off from the obligation to duty on the Creatures part, if they were uncertain of the continuance of his Being, by whom Rewards and Puniſhments were to be diſtributed in the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Communicable *Perfections of God: And firſt, of thoſe which relate to the* Divine Underſtanding, *viz.* Knowledg, Wiſdom, particular Providence.

BEſides thoſe *incommunicable* Attributes already inſiſted upon, there are others ſtyled *communicable*, becauſe they are in ſome lower degree, and by way of participation, communicated to other inferior Beings. And concerning theſe, there is a neceſſity that we ſhould make an eſtimate of them, by ſuch rules and meaſures as our natures are capable of. And becauſe the chief perfections that we can apprehend in any reaſonable Eſſence, muſt refer to one of theſe three things, the *Underſtanding*, the *Will*, the *Faculties* of *working*; for this reaſon, theſe Divine perfections may be reduced to theſe three heads. And whatever is the moſt excellent of rational Beings, muſt excel in each of theſe, (*i.e.*), There is no

no kind or degree of perfection that our imaginations are able to conceive, but these excellencies of the Divine nature, must run out still beyond it, so as not to be determined by any real or imaginary bounds.

I purpose to treat particularly concerning each of them, beginning with those perfections that belong to the Divine *Understanding*, namely, his *Knowledg*, *Wisdom*, and *particular Providence*.

1. By the *Knowledg* of God, I mean that perfection or faculty whereby he understands and considers things absolutely and as they are in their own natures, their *powers*, *properties*, *differences*, together with all the circumstances belonging to them. And 'tis necessary to the notion of God, that this should be ascribed to him, in the utmost perfection of it, infinitely beyond what the most knowing and the most learned men can pretend unto.

1. His *Knowledg* is most deep and intimate, reaching to the very *essence* of things, ours but slight and superficial.

2. His is clear and distinct, ours but confused and dark.

3. His infallible, ours doubtful and liable to mistakes.

4. His easie, and without labour and diffi-

difficulty, always preſent and actual; ours gotten by *ſore travail*, and eaſily loſt again by the defects of *memory* or *age*.

5. His univerſal, extending to all objects; ours ſhort and narrow, reaching only to ſome few things, *That which is wanting cannot be numbred.* Eccl. 1:15.

He hath a perfect comprehenſion of all things, that have been, that are, or ſhall be, according to all the various relations, dependencies, circumſtances, belonging to each of them. So that this Attribute of his muſt be infinite and unbounded, both *extenſivè*, with reſpect to the ſeveral kinds of objects which it comprehends; and likewiſe *intenſivè*, as it ſees every ſingle object with a moſt perfect infallible view. He doth not only underſtand all particulars; but he knows every particular ſo exactly, as if he were wholly taken up and intent in his thoughts upon that alone. There is a vaſt difference betwixt the wiſeſt of men, and ſuch as are grolly ignorant and ſottiſh; and much greater betwixt men and other creatures, the little Inſects, Ants and Worms, which are no ways fit to paſs a judgment concerning humane counſels and deſigns. And yet theſe things hold ſome proportion to one another, being both finite; whereas betwixt

twixt Gods *knowledg* and mans, the diſtance is infinite.

And that this Attribute doth belong to the natural notion of God, may appear,

1. From the acknowledgment of the *Heathen*. *Tully* mentions it as an uſual ſaying of *Thales*, *Deos omnia cernere*, God beholds all things. So *Seneca*, *Nihil Deo clauſum, intereſt animis noſtris, & mediis cogitationibus intervenit. Nothing is hid from God, he is intimate to our minds, and mingles himſelf with our very thoughts.*

Beſides, that general practice amongſt them of ſwearing by him, and atteſting him in their moſt ſolemn compacts, doth ſufficiently imply their belief of his *Omniſcience.*

2. From *natural reaſon.* Nothing can be more manifeſt, than that *knowledg* is a perfection, and therefore ought to be aſcribed to that Being which is ſuppoſed to have all poſſible perfection. 'Tis a perfection that we know to be in ſome of the *Creatures*, and therefore muſt be much more in the *Creator* himſelf. *He that made the eye, ſhall he not ſee? He that gives to men underſtanding, ſhall not he know?*

Beſides, that the denial of this perfection, would neceſſarily infer many other imperfections in the Divine nature. It would

would deſtroy his *Wiſdom*, *Providence*, *Dominion*. Where there is no knowledg, there can be no forecaſt or proviſion for the future, nor any kind of regular government. In brief, the denial of this Attribute muſt take away his *Goodneſs*, *Veracity*, *Juſtice*. That Being cannot properly be ſaid to be *good*, which doth act either out of ignorance or blind neceſſity.

2. As *Knowledg* doth reſpect things abſolutely; ſo *Wiſdom* doth conſider the relations of things one to another, under the notion of *Means* and *End*, and of their fitneſs or unfitneſs for the various purpoſes to which they are deſigned.

And this likewiſe doth belong to the natural notion of God, may be evident,

1. By *Teſtimony*. The *Heathen Writers* are full of expreſſions to this purpoſe. *Plato* aſſerts *Wiſdom* to be a thing of that excellency, that it cannot properly be aſcribed to any, but God. It is a ſaying of *Tully*, *Sapiens eſt Homo, & propterea Deus*; *Man is wiſe, and therefore much more God.* And in the ſame Book, *Deo tribuenda eſt ratio recta, conſtanſque*; *To God is to be aſcribed right and ſteady*

Phæd.

Natur. Deor.

Lib. 2.

Rea-

Reaſon; and a little after he ſays, it muſt be ſuch as is *perfect* and *abſolute*.

Nothing more frequent in *Seneca*, *Epictetus*, *Antoninus*, than to perſwade men to an acquieſcence under all the diſpenſations of Providence, becauſe they are ordered by the higheſt Wiſdom.

2. By *Reaſon*. The want of wiſdom is counted a very great imperfection, and one of the worſt defects belonging to men; and that which every one is moſt unwilling to own, being content to be counted any thing rather than a Fool. And therefore there is very good reaſon, why we ſhould remove this imperfection from that *Being*, which is ſuppoſed to have all poſſible perfections. And what was ſaid before concerning the denial of his *Knowledg*, muſt be equally true likewiſe in this caſe, that it muſt neceſſarily deſtroy his other perfections, or render them inſignificant. What reaſon would there be for men to truſt either to his Goodneſs, or his Juſtice, or his Providence in the managing of things, if he were not withall infinitely wiſe. And as for his *Power*, *that* without wiſdom, would be but a kind of a blind force, as much to be feared and hated, as loved and truſted to.

3. The third *Attribute* to be conſidered is his *particular Providence*, whereby he does ſuperintend and take care of every individual thing in the world; continuing them in their Beings, diſpoſing of their operations and effects in ſuch a wiſe order, as may be moſt ſuitable to thoſe ends and purpoſes for which they are deſigned. This likewiſe doth belong to the natural notion of God. Though it muſt be granted, that the belief of this Attribute hath met with ſome oppoſition from ſeveral of the Philoſophers, chiefly *Epicurus*, who in truth was an Atheiſt, and out of a pretended reſpect to the Deity, did think it to be below his *Greatneſs*; and for the trouble of it, inconſiſtent with his *Happineſs*, to have any regard to theſe Inferiour things, which he therefore imagined to be left to their own courſes, whilſt the Divine nature is wholly taken up in the contemplation of it ſelf.

Semota a noſtris rebus ſejunctaq; longè. as *Lucretius* ſpeaks. But becauſe this might ſeem to argue too ſlight and narrow apprehenſions of the Deity, therefore others to mend the matter, have thought that he might have leiſure, and perhaps an inclination, to extend his Providence to *heavenly things*, but not to *earthly*.

earthly. Others yet more bountiful, will allow it to reach both to *Celeſtial* and *Terreſtrial* things: But then it muſt be only to the *general kinds* of them, which are to be put into a natural courſe; not to *every particular* of each kind by it ſelf, which they conceived muſt needs prove too great a trouble and diſtraction to his mind.

But 'tis evident that all theſe wild conceits did proceed from a miſapprehenſion of what kind of knowledg or wiſdom does belong to the Deity, namely, *infinite* and *abſolutely perfect*, not to be limited, nor capable of any difficulty to be put upon it, by the nature or number of things.

Any particular man, whom we know to be a perſon of *Diligence* and *Sagacity*, may without any trouble to himſelf undertake the management of any *ſingle* buſineſs. Why, God can with far greater facility provide for *all*, than any ſingle man can for *one*. Though we ſhould ſuppoſe that the particulars to be taken care of, are *infinite*, yet ſo is his *Wiſdom* likewiſe; and there is the ſame proportion of *infinite* to *infinite*, as of *one* to *one*. And that this Attribute doth belong to the natural notion of God, may be made evident,

1. By the more general consent of the wise and learned Heathen Writers (notwithstanding the dissent of some amongst them). *Aristotle* himself, or whoever else was the Author of that Book *de Mundo*, amongst other Testimonies he gives of the Divine Providence, hath this for one, "That as a Governour is to a Ship, as "a Law to a City, as a General in an "Army, so is God in the world; but "with this difference, that they perform "their business not without labour, care "and difficulty; whereas the Divine Pro- "vidence doth dispose of all and every "particular thing, without the least kind "of trouble. *Tully* doth acknowledg that the Providence of God doth extend not only, *universo generi hominum, sed etiam singulis*, to mankind in *general*, but likewise to every *particular* person. And in another place, *Deorum providentiâ mundus administratur, iidemq; consulunt rebus humanis, neq; solum universis, sed etiam singulis. The whole world is governed by Divine Providence, and not only human affairs in general, but likewise every particular business.* *Seneca* speaking of such as denied particular Providence, hath this remarkable passage, *Sunt qui putant*, &c. "There are some who think so well "of

Cap. 6.

Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

De Divinatione.

Nat. Quæst. lib. 1. *Præf.*

"of their own minds, that they are able "to take care of their own buſineſs, and "to provide for other mens affairs like-"wiſe; And yet are ſo abſurd as to que-"ſtion, whether this great Univerſe, "whereof they themſelves are but a ve-"ry inconſiderable part, be managed by "any kind of *Wiſdom* or counſel, and "not left wholly to *Chance*. *Hierocles* doth acknowledg, that the Providence of God doth extend to contingencies. And to ſay no more by way of Teſtimony, this may ſufficiently appear, by the general practice of ſwearing by Him, and praying to Him, which doth ſufficiently evince their belief of his particular Providence. *Pythag. Carm.*

2. By Reaſon. The denial of this Attribute will evacuate ſeveral others, namely, his *Goodneſs*, *Juſtice*, *Dominion*, which muſt all ſignifie nothing without *Providence* in the application of them. And withall, the denial of this, doth take away the ground of Worſhip. The belief of a particular Providence, being neceſſary unto that adoration which we owe to the Divine nature. The Greatneſs and the Excellency of the Deity in it ſelf, abſtracted from any concernment of our own, will have but a very flat

and jejune operation upon our hearts. Do we not find by experience, that men have but little regard to the great *Mogul*, The *Cham of Tartary*, The Emperors of *China* and *Perſia*, and ſuch other Potentates of remote Countreys? who though they are Princes of great power and magnificence, able to bring many hundred thouſands of fighting-men into the field; yet they having nothing to do with us, nor we with them, we have therefore but a ſmall regard for them. Whereas the next ordinary Gentleman, who is but Lord of a Mannour, or Juſtice of Peace, with whom we are concerned to deal, and who hath any power of puniſhing or rewarding, of doing us either a kindneſs or a diſcourteſie, we uſe to be accordingly affected in our eſteem and veneration towards him. And thus muſt it be likewiſe for our adoration of the Divine nature, which will be either more or leſs, according as we conceive our ſelves more or leſs concerned in his Providence towards us.

Amyraldus.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the Perfections *relating to the* Divine Will; Goodneſs, Juſtice, Faithfulneſs.

2. THE Perfections belonging to the Divine *Will*, were before reckoned to be, 1. His *Goodneſs*. 2. His *Juſtice*. 3. His *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs*.

1. His *Goodneſs*. By which word is ſometimes ſignified, the notion of *Perfection* in general; and ſometimes it denotes *Moral* goodneſs, in oppoſition to all kind of moral imperfections. Of both which kinds of Goodneſs, God is the Fountain and Author, the Rule and Meaſure, from whom all created goodneſs is derived, and by conformity to whom it is to be eſtimated. But that more particular ſenſe of this word, according to which it is now to be treated of, doth reſpect the *inclination of the Divine Will* toward his Creatures; that *propenſion* of his, *whereby he is* generally *diſpoſed to procure their happineſs*: in oppoſition to *envy* or *malice*, which delights in withholding good

from others, or doing miſchief to them. And that this Attribute is natural to the notion of God, may appear,

1. By *Teſtimony*. There being no one perfection about which the generality of men are more agreed than about this, (excepting only the *Epicureans*), who attribute nothing to God but everlaſting happineſs and bleſſedneſs, which yet cannot be without *Goodneſs*. *Plato* ſtyles him τὸ κρεῖττον, the *beſt Being*. And his common title amongſt the *Latins*, was *Deus Optimus Maximus*. And our forefathers in this Nation, ſeem to have given this very name of *God* from *Good*. That is a known and an excellent paſſage in *Seneca*, *Primus eſt Deorum cultus, Deos credere; deinde reddere illis Majeſtatem ſuam, reddere bonitatem ſine qua nulla Majeſtas*. "The moſt "fundamental thing in Religion, is to ac- "knowledg the Being of God, and then to "demean our ſelves towards him ſuitably "to the greatneſs of his Majeſty, and to his "Goodneſs, without which there can be no "Majeſty. And in another place, "He "that doth not acknowledg the *Goodneſs* "of the Divine nature, doth not take no- "tice of the general cuſtom amongſt men, "of praying to him in their diſtreſs, and "making vows both publick and private,

De Benefic. lib. 4.

"which

"which would not be, unleſs they had "this perſwaſion well fixed within them, "that God was ready to hear and to help "them, and that he is in his own nature "propenſe to kindneſs and pity. *Nec in hunc furorem omnes mortales conſenſiſſent, alloquendi ſurda numina & inefficaces Deos.* "Nor is it poſſible, that all man- "kind ſhould ſo unanimouſly agree toge- "ther in ſo great a madneſs, of praying to "ſuch Deities as they did not believe "could either hear or help them.

And in another place, *Quædam ſunt quæ nocere non poſſunt*, &c. "Some things "there are of ſo benign and helpful a na- "ture, ſo mild and beneficial, that no- "thing of evil or hurt can proceed from "them: Such is the Deity, who neither "can, nor will, do any thing that is miſ- "chievous; being as remote from any acti- "on, that is injurious to others as to it "ſelf. *De Ira.* lib. 2. cap. 27.

And elſewhere, *Ecce ſceleratis ſol oritur, & Piratis patent maria.* "He cauſeth "his Sun to ſhine upon the juſt and un- "juſt, and the Seas are open to Pirates as "well as Merchants. He communicates his "bounty to us in our infancy and child- "hood, when we can have no ſenſe of "it: Nor doth he preſently withdraw and "ceaſe *Ibid.* lib. 4. cap. 26. *De Benefic.* 7. 31.

"ceaſe his favours towards ſuch wretches,
"as make a queſtion and doubt concern-
De Benefic. lib. 4. "ing the Author of them: Nor is there
"any perſon ſo miſerable and wretched,
"who hath not in ſeveral reſpects had ex-
"perience of the Divine bounty. *Hierocles*
Pythag. Carm. aſſerts, that God is *eſſentially* good; not by accident and from external motives and conſiderations.

2. By *Reaſon*. It is ſo plain, ſo fundamental a notion, that Goodneſs muſt belong to God, that I know not how to go about the proof of it. 'Tis the brighteſt ray of the Deity, the firſt and cleareſt notion we have of God. We may ſee every day many thouſand viſible effects of this Goodneſs in the world. And there are ſome glimpſes and weak impreſſions of it amongſt the Creatures, and therefore much more muſt it be in the Creator himſelf.

This is the foundation of all Worſhip and Religion amongſt men, the reaſon of their Prayers to God, and Praiſes of him. Without this, his other Attributes would not afford any ſufficient ground for our Love and Adoration of him. *Knowledg* and *Power* without *Goodneſs*, would be but *craft* and *violence*. He can by his *Wiſdom* out-wit his creatures, and eaſily im-

impoſe upon them; and by his *Power* he could tyrannize over them, and play with their miſery; but that he will not do thus, we are aſſured by his *Goodneſs*. This is ſo eſſential to him, that to imagine him without *Goodneſs*, were to imagine a God without a Deity, *i. e.* without that which chiefly conſtitutes him what he is: Nay, it were to imagine inſtead of a God, a worſe Devil, and more qualify'd to do miſchief, than any is now in the world.

2. The ſecond Attribute belonging to the Divine Will, is his *Juſtice*. By which is meant not only the rectitude of his Nature in general, but more ſpecially *his dealing with his creatures according to the deſert of their deeds.*

And that this Perfection is natural to the notion of God, may appear,

1. By *Teſtimony*. It is an aſſertion of *Plato*, *Thiatetus.*
Θεὸς οὐδαμῇ οὐδαμῶς ἄδικος, ἀλλ' ὡς οἷόν τε δικαιότατος,
"God cannot be ſaid in any kind or "reſpect whatſoever to be unjuſt, but ſo "far as is poſſible to be moſt juſt. *Tully* lays it down as a principle, that before men are fit to aſſociate under government, they ought to be firſt convinced, that God is the ſupreme Governour of the World, and doth take particular notice, *De Legibus* lib. 2.

Qua-

Qualis quiſque ſit, quid agat, quid in ſe admittat, quâ mente, quâ pietate religiones colat, piorumque & impiorum habere rationem; "what kind of perſon every "one is, what he doth, and what he thinks, "how his heart ſtands inclined to the du-"ties of Religion, and will deal with eve-"ry one according to his *reality* or *hypo-"criſie* in ſuch matters.

And that this was the general belief amongſt them, may appear by the univerſal cuſtom of atteſting him by ſolemn Oaths; whereby they did appeal to him as a Righteous Judg, who would certainly revenge all falſhood and injuſtice.

2. From *Reaſon*. And that not ſo much becauſe Juſtice is a perfection, as becauſe Injuſtice is ſo great a blemiſh and imperfection; eſpecially in the great Soveraign and Judg of the world, who having all power and authority in his hands, can have no temptation or byaſs imaginable to do any thing that is unjuſt.

3. His *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs*. By which is meant, *the congruity of his words to his intentions*, eſpecially in reſpect of any promiſes which he hath made.

And that this doth belong to the natural notion of God, may be made evident,

1. From

1. From *Teſtimony*. *Plato* aſſerts, "all "kind of lying and falſhood to be imper- "fections moſt odious both to God and "man, and that the Divine nature is ab- "ſolutely free from all kind of tempta- "tion to it; ſo that there can be no ima- "ginable reaſon why God ſhould falſi- "fie. *De Repub. lib. 2.*

Porphyrie in the life of *Pythagoras* tells us, that it was one of his precepts μάλιστα δὲ ἀληθεύειν, that men ſhould moſt of all endeavour after truth, becauſe this only can make them like God. And he adds afterwards, that *Truth* is ſo great a perfection, that if God would render himſelf viſible to men, he would chuſe *Light* for his *Body*, and *Truth* for his *Soul*.

2. From *Reaſon*. It is one of the greateſt reproaches, and an argument of baſeneſs amongſt men, to be counted a Lyar: And therefore muſt it neceſſarily be removed from that Being which is ſuppoſed to have all poſſible perfections, and to be the *Father of Truth*, as the Devil is of Lyes.

That which tempts men to falſifie, is uſually either the fear of ſome evil, or the hope of ſome advantage. The reaſon why they break their words, is either becauſe of their raſhneſs and inconſiderateneſs in making

making promiſes, or their forgetfulneſs in not minding them, or their inconſtancy in not keeping to them, or their impotence to perform them. But now the Divine nature being infinitely wiſe and allſufficient, can have no temptation to be otherwiſe than true and faithful. His infinite *Knowledg* and *Wiſdom* doth ſecure him, from *being deceived* himſelf; his *Omnipotence* doth exempt him, from ſtanding in need of *deceiving others*; and his *Goodneſs* ſecures us, from the leſt ſuſpition of any inclination thereto.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Perfections *belonging to the* Powers *and* Faculties of Acting, *viz.* Power, Dominion, Diſtribution of future Rewards and Puniſhments.

THoſe Perfections which are eſſential to the Notion of God, with reſpect to his *faculties of working*, are likewiſe three-fold:

1. His Power or Omnipotence.
2. His Dominion or right to govern us in this life.
3. His Diſtributing of future Rewards and Puniſhments after this life.

1. By the *Power* or Omnipotence of God is meant, an *ability of doing all ſuch things, the doing of which may argue Perfection*, and which do not imply a contradiction, either *in the things themſelves*, or to the nature and perfection of the *Doer*. Some things are repugnant to the perfection of God, either *Naturally*, as that

that he ſhould be ſick or dye; or elſe *Morally*, as that he ſhould lye or deceive: Both which imply *imperfection*. And ſome other things may imply *Contradiction*, either directly, or by plain conſequence. And of ſuch matters it is not ſo proper to ſay, that *he cannot do them*, as that *they cannot be done*. As the object of the Underſtanding, the Eye, and the Ear, is that which is intelligible, viſible, audible: So the object of Power, muſt be that which is Poſſible. And as it is no prejudice to the moſt perfect underſtanding, or ſight, or hearing, that it doth not underſtand what is not *intelligible*, or ſee what is not *viſible*, or hear what is not *audible*; ſo neither is it to the moſt perfect *Power*, that it doth not do what is not *poſſible*. Every kind of faculty being neceſſarily determined to its own proper object.

But as for all Poſſible things, it is natural and neceſſary to apprehend of God, that he can do whatſoever any other ſingle thing, or a combination of all other things put together, can perform, and infinitely more; and that without any kind of labour or difficulty: So that his Power muſt be infinite *extenſively*, with reſpect to all objects; and *intenſively*,

ſively, with reſpect to the acts of it, together with the *manner* and *degrees* of them.

That this kind of Omnipotence doth belong to the natural notion of God, may appear,

1. By *Teſtimony*. It is a frequent title given unto God by the *Grecian* Philoſophers, who ſtyle him παντοκράτωρ, Omnipotent.

And nothing is more frequent amongſt the *Latines*, than the titles of *Jupiter Omnipotens*, *Optimus-Maximus*: He is generally acknowledged to be the Creator and Governour of the World, upon which account they call him, *Opifex rerum*, and *Rector mundi*. It is an acknowledgment of *Tully*, *Nihil eſt quod Deus efficere non poſſit, & quidem ſine ullo labore.* "There "is nothing which God cannot do, and "that without any kind of labour. De Divi. nat.

2. By *Reaſon*. If the power of God could be limited or circumſcribed, it muſt either be by ſomething of greater power, which is inconſiſtent with the notion of his being ſupreme and ſoveraign: Or elſe by the difficulty and repugnancy which there is in the nature of things; which could not be in the firſt creation of them, becauſe there was nothing then to make

any reſiſtance, and ſince that, there is nothing but what was made by him, derived from him, and is dependant upon him, and therefore muſt be ſubject to him. And beſides, all ſuch things being finite, muſt therefore be at a vaſt diſtance of inequality from the *infinite* power of God.

To which may be added, that all his other perfections would be inſignificant and ineffectual, if his power of acting, whereby they were to be communicated to inferior natures, were not anſwerable to them. Meer *Knowledg* without *Power* would be but an idle ſpeculation; *Wiſdom* to contrive, without *Power* to effect, would be but vain and uſeleſs. What could his *goodneſs* and *mercy* ſignifie to us, if he were not able to give any proofs of it. And ſo likewiſe for his *Juſtice* and *Faithfulneſs*, which there would be no reaſon to fear or to depend upon, if Rewards and Puniſhments were not at his diſpoſal, and he had not ſufficient power to perform what he promiſes. Nor could there be any ſufficient ground for his being acknowledged the ſupreme Lawgiver. For why ſhould any one take upon him to intermeddle in the affairs of the world, and to preſcribe Laws to others, who had no power to diſpoſe of things, and were not

not able to enforce obedience to his own Laws?

In brief, without the belief of this Attribute, there can be no foundation for Religion, amongſt men; becauſe there could be no ground for our *Faith* or *Truſt*, no reaſon for our *Hope* or *Fear*.

2. Beſides this *abſolute* conſideration of the Divine *Power*, there is likewiſe a *relative* notion of it, reſpecting that *Dominion* and Juriſdiction which he hath over reaſonable Creatures, his right to govern them in this life; to command, prohibit what he pleaſes, to reward and puniſh as ſhall ſeem good unto him. And that this doth belong to the natural notion of God, may appear,

1. By *Teſtimony*. *Plato*, and *Tully*, and *Plutarch*, do often ſtyle him, the *Lord of all things*, the *Eternal God*, *Father and Creator of the world, and all things in it*. *Deo nihil præſtantius, ab eo igitur neceſſe eſt mundum regi*, ſaith *Tully*, "God is the "moſt excellent Being, and therefore is "it neceſſary that he ſhould be the Go- "vernour of the world. And in another place, *Deorum immortalium numine, omnia regi gubernarique credimus*. "We "believe that God is the Governour of "all things. *Sympoſiac.* lib. 8. Q. 1. *Nat. Deor.*

To which I ſhall add that teſtimony of
Dan. 4. 34, a Heathen King, *Nebuchadnezzar*, in that
35. Remonſtrance which he publiſhed *to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth*, viz. *that Gods dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing before him. And he doth according to his will, in the armies of heaven, and amongſt the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what doſt thou?*

And as this was their declared opinion, ſo was their practice ſuitable to it; by owning that to be their Duty which they ſuppoſed to be agreeable to his Will, and which would render them acceptable to him.

2. By *Reaſon*. If we conſider thoſe ſeveral *titles* which can give right to Dominion amongſt men, we ſhall find them all to concur in God. Now men claim a right of Government, either by Conqueſt, or Purchaſe, or Compact, or by having others born in a ſtate of ſubjection under them, or by their having oblig'd others with any ſpecial bounty or favour; but above all theſe, there is another ground of ſubjection, which men cannot pretend

to,

to, namely, the *giving of Being* to a thing: And this must needs, above all other claims, be the greatest imaginable right, for the government and disposal of that thing, according to the pleasure of him that made it. *It is he that made us*, (says the *Psalmist*) *and not we our selves*; and therefore *we are his people*, and 'tis reasonable that we should be under his dominion and government. Psal. 100. 3

3. The distribution of future Rewards and Punishments to men, according as their lives and actions have been in this world.

That this likewise doth belong to the natural notion of God, may appear,

1. By *Testimony*. From all kind of Heathen Writers. Nothing hath been more universally believed in all places and times, not only amongst the civilized Nations, the *Grecians* and *Romans*; but likewise amongst such as were most wild and barbarous.

All sorts and Professions of men, of any special eminence, as Princes, Statesmen, Souldiers, Philosophers, Poets, Artists, have had great impressions upon their minds concerning a future state. And it may be reasonably presumed (as *Tully* observes), that those who do so much excel others in *Tusc.* Q. lib. 1.

their parts and their virtue, are not generally miſtaken in their judgments about a natural truth.

Whereas ſeveral other opinions and Doctrines, which at ſome times have prevailed, have afterwards been rejected; *this* hath ſtill kept up in its vigor and authority, amidſt all the various revolutions of Government and Religion, of Nations and Churches.

The moſt ancient Philoſophers amongſt the *Grecians*, who reduced that people to civility, were *Thales*, *Pherecides*, *Pythagoras*; the laſt of whom was for a long time of ſo great authority, that no others were counted learned but ſuch as were his followers. And each of theſe have moſt expreſly aſſerted this Doctrine. And beſides there are many other teſtimonies to this purpoſe, cited out of *Plato*, *Empedocles*, *Plutarch*, together with *Homer*, *Euripides*, *Sophocles*, for the *Grecians*; the ancient *Druids* amongſt the *Gauls*; the *Brachmans* amongſt the *Indians*, who are all mention'd as bearing witneſs to this truth, by *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others.

And as for the *Latines*, I ſhall mention only two teſtimonies; That of *Tully*, *Permanere animos arbitramur, conſenſu nationum*

Tuſc. lib. 1.

num omnium. "We do believe that the "Souls of men do abide after death, by "the conſent of all Nations. And that of *Seneca*, *Cum de animarum æternitate diſſerimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet, conſenſus omnium, aut timentium inferos, aut colentium.* "When we diſ- "pute about the immortality of the Soul, "the general conſent of men, either fear- "ing or worſhipping the infernal powers, "is of no ſmall moment with us. *Epiſt.* 117.

That common practice amongſt the Heathen, of worſhipping their departed *Heroes*, doth ſuppoſe a general belief that their Souls did remain after death, and were advanced unto a higher ſtate of happineſs and power.

In brief, all the atteſtations amongſt them, concerning the *Souls immortality*, are founded in their belief of the neceſſity of this principle, That there muſt be a future ſtate of Rewards and Puniſhments.

Though it muſt be granted, that this ſtate as to the manner of it, is by them deſcribed in ſuch a Poetical way, as is more fit to *amuſe* and make impreſſion upon the *vulgar*, than to *ſatisfie* the reaſon of the *judicious.*

They tell us, that good men ſhall after

their death be received into the *Elyſian Fields* and gardens, which are always flouriſhing and pleaſant, where men ſhall be continually exerciſed in ſuch kind of employments as are moſt ſuitable to their inclinations; Some in Combats, Running, Wreſtling; Others in Philoſophical Diſcourſes; others in Dancing or Muſick; where ſuch kinds of Actions or Things, whether in themſelves worthy, or meerly innocent, in which good men during the time of their lives, did find any ſpecial pleaſure, ſhould be enjoyed by them in the utmoſt perfection.

And as this ſhall be the ſtate of ſuch as have been *Virtuous*, ſo thoſe who have been *Wicked* ſhall be thruſt down into the infernal Regions, into Priſons and dark Caverns, where *Furies* are appointed for their tormentors, who ſhall inflict upon them various kinds of puniſhments, according to the nature and quality of the Crimes of which they have been guilty.

And though ſuch kind of enjoyments wherein theſe *Heathen* placed their future happineſs, be not altogether ſo ſenſual as the *Turkiſh Paradiſe*, yet are they too earthly and groſs for any rational man to reſt in as his chief felicity. And

muſt

muſt, even to the judgment of meer reaſon, ſeem altogether deſpicable in compariſon to the *Chriſtians Heaven*; which conſiſts in the raiſing of our natures to the higheſt perfection of which they are capable, in a perpetual viſion and fruition of the Supreme Good.

It muſt be granted, that the principal evidence for this Doctrine concerning a future ſtate of Rewards and Puniſhments, is to be derived from *Scripture*, eſpecially from the New Teſtament, where 'tis ſaid *that life and immortality is brought to light by the Goſpel.* 2 Tim. 1. 10.

Not but that there is evidence for it, both from the Old Teſtament, and from the light of Nature. 'Tis true indeed, that Temporal things are more expreſly inſiſted upon in the promiſes and threats of the Old Teſtament, upon account of the groſneſs and dulneſs of the people of the *Jews*, who being more immerſed in ſenſible things, were therefore more eaſie to be wrought upon by ſuch conſiderations. But that theſe things were not then intended for the chief motives of Religion, may appear from the Hiſtories concerning ſuch Religious perſons as lived in thoſe firſt ages. Amongſt whom, there were but very few (if any) that did attain

tain to any ſuch perfect felicity in reſpect of worldly things, but that they might very well apply to themſelves the words of old *Jacob*, and ſay with him, *Few and evil have the days of my life been.* And if God had intended theſe temporal enjoyments, for the chief felicity which that Religion was to entitle them unto; thoſe very hiſtories upon record, where theſe promiſes are mentioned, concerning the ſufferings of the beſt men in thoſe times, muſt needs have been a diſparagement and confutation to theſe promiſes themſelves.

But beſides the teſtimonies to this purpoſe from Scripture and revelation, it is not imaginable that in a point of ſo great moment, and ſo univerſal conſequence as this is, God ſhould have *left himſelf without a witneſs unto all the Nations of the world*; but that all men ſhould be endowed with ſuch natural capacities and notions, as being improved by conſideration, will afford ſufficient evidence for the belief of this great and fundamental Principle.

As for ſuch men who live under the ſenſe of guilt, whoſe intereſt it is that there ſhould be no future account; It cannot be otherwiſe expected from ſuch, but that they ſhould be willing to disbelieve

lieve this. And from hence it is, that ſome of the ancient Philoſophers have employed their learning and ſubtilty, to diſpute themſelves into ſome kind of doubt and uncertainty about it. And yet the generality even of theſe, have been forced to acknowledg it much more probable than the contrary. And as for the vulgar ſort of people, who are guided by the more ſimple dictates of nature, theſe have in all Ages and Nations ſubmitted themſelves to this doctrine, and profeſſed a firm belief of it. And though vulgar opinion be but a very bad Topick, about ſuch matters as may gratifie men in their eaſe and ſenſual appetites; yet in ſuch other opinions as are croſs to their worldly intereſts, it may argue ſuch things to be from ſome natural impreſſion upon their minds, which they muſt believe, and cannot otherwiſe chuſe.

The Arguments I would make uſe of to this purpoſe, may be reduced to theſe three general heads:

1. The ſuitableneſs of this Principle, to the moſt natural Notions of our minds.
2. The neceſſity of it to the government of mens lives and actions in this world.

3. The

3. The neceſſity of it for the vindication of Divine Providence.

1. I begin with the firſt, The ſuitableneſs of it to the moſt natural Notions of our minds, and thoſe kind of impreſſions which belong to us, as we are reaſonable Creatures. We ſee by experience, that all other things (ſo far as we are able to judg) *Minerals*, *Plants*, *Beaſts*, &c. are naturally endowed with ſuch principles as are moſt fit to promote the perfection of their natures, in their ſeveral kinds. And therefore it is by no means credible, that Mankind only, the moſt excellent of all other Creatures in this viſible world, for the ſervice of whom ſo many other things ſeem to be deſigned, ſhould have ſuch kind of principles interwoven in his very nature, as do contain in them meer cheats and deluſions. And therefore whatſoever thoſe things are, which the generality of mankind, eſpecially the moſt wiſe and the moſt conſiderate part of them, do agree in, ought to be allowed for highly credible; otherwiſe it muſt follow, that we are framed with ſuch kind of Faculties, as in our moſt cautious exerciſe of them, are more likely to ſeduce us and expoſe us to error, than to direct and lead us to the truth. But

But I ſhall endeavour to manifeſt this more particularly, by theſe three conſiderations.

1. This principle is moſt ſuitable to the general apprehenſions of mankind, concerning the nature of good and evil.

2. To thoſe natural hopes and expectations which the generality of good men have, concerning a ſtate of future happineſs.

3. To thoſe natural fears and expectations which the generality of wicked men are poſſeſſed with, concerning a future ſtate of puniſhment and miſery.

1. This Principle is moſt ſuitable to the general apprehenſions of Mankind, concerning the nature of good and evil. All men heretofore have agreed, that there is ſuch a thing as the Law of Nature, whereby things are diſtinguiſhed into good and bad; according to which, the actions of men are determined to be either virtuous or vicious. And as the one of theſe doth in the eſſence of it imply comelineſs and reward, ſo doth the other denote turpitude and puniſhment; theſe things being implied in the very definitions of virtue and vice. And from hence it will follow, That as there is ſome ſuperiour power who hath put this Law into our natures, ſo will he

he take care to enforce the obſervance of it, by rewarding and puniſhing men accordingly. This being implied in the nature of a Law.

If there be nothing in the naked eſſence of things that makes them to differ, but what doth meerly ariſe from Cuſtom and poſitive Laws; why then Cuſtom and Law would be able to render it a very virtuous and commendable thing, for a man to be ingrateful, a breaker of compacts, a falſe witneſs, a perjured perſon; which is ſo monſtrous a poſition, that the common reaſon of mankind will abhor it, upon the firſt propoſal. Nothing is more obvious, than that there is an univerſal deſire amongſt men, of ſeeming honeſt: The moſt impudent and profligate wretch being loth to be eſteemed what really he is. The very ſin of hypocriſie, ſo general amongſt men, doth give a large teſtimony to the beauty of goodneſs, and the deformity of vice. Nor is there any account to be given, why there ſhould be impreſſed upon the nature of men ſuch a value for the one, and diſlike for the other, if there were not in the things themſelves, ſomething ſuitable to thoſe contrary affections.

We ſee by experience, that there is ſuch a kind of reſt and acquieſcence in the mind

mind, upon the diſcovery of truth, and the doing of virtuous actions, as belongs to natural bodies when they are in their proper places; which may argue theſe things to have ſome peculiar ſuitableneſs to the ſoul of man, and that the oppoſites to them do offer violence to ſome natural principle belonging to it.

2. This principle is moſt ſuitable to thoſe natural hopes and expectations, which the generality of good men have concerning a ſtate of future happineſs. From whence doth ariſe that confidence and courage, whereby thoſe of meaneſt quality and abilities (if otherwiſe virtuous perſons) can ſupport themſelves in their ſufferings for that which is good; which doth neceſſarily ſuppoſe in them a ſtrong and even a natural belief and perſwaſion of ſuch a future ſtate, wherein their ſufferings ſhall be conſidered and rewarded.

Beſides that, there is a ſtrong averſion amongſt men, againſt a dark ſtate of annihilation, which no man can think of without great regret of mind: And likewiſe a natural deſire in all men after a ſtate of happineſs and perfection. And no natural deſire is in vain. All other things have ſomewhat to ſatisfie their natural appetites. And if we conſider the utter impoſſibility of

of attaining to any ſuch condition in this life, this will render it highly credible, that there muſt be another ſtate wherein this happineſs is attainable; otherwiſe mankind muſt fail of his chief end, being by a natural principle moſt ſtrongly inclined to ſuch a ſtate of happineſs as he can never attain to; as if he were purpoſely framed to be tormented betwixt theſe two paſſions, Deſire and Deſpair; an earneſt propenſion after happineſs, and an utter incapacity of ever enjoying it; as if nature it ſelf, whereby all other things are diſpoſed to their perfection, did ſerve only in mankind to make them miſerable. And which is yet more conſiderable, the better and the wiſer any man is, the more earneſt deſires and hopes hath he after ſuch a ſtate of happineſs. And if there be no ſuch thing, not only Nature, but Virtue likewiſe muſt contribute to make men miſerable; than which, nothing can ſeem more unreaſonable, to thoſe who believe a juſt and a wiſe providence.

3. This principle is moſt ſuitable to thoſe fears and expectations which the generality of wicked men are poſſeſſed with, concerning a future ſtate of miſery. Witneſs thoſe natural ſuggeſtions of conſcience in the worſt of men, that upon any wicked actions

actions (though never ſo private) are oftentimes ſtartling of them, with the apprehenſions of another Judicature and Tribunal, before which they ſhall be called to an account for the cloſeſt ſins. All that ſecret regret, and thoſe inward ſmitings, *Laniatus & Ictus*, which are ſo often felt in the minds of men, upon the commiſſion of any great ſin, do argue ſome common intimations, even in the light of Nature, of another Judgment after this life, wherein they ſhall be accountable for ſuch actions as men do not puniſh or take notice of.

And theſe natural fears do uſually ſeize upon all kind of men promiſcuouſly: Even thoſe who are moſt potent, who by their own Will can give Laws to Nations, and command mighty Armies; yet cannot they avoid theſe checks and laſhes of conſcience, but that they will ſeize upon them, and ſhake them as well as the pooreſt meaneſt Subject. Nor can ſuch as are moſt obſtinately wicked, who with their utmoſt ſtudy and endeavour, apply themſelves to the ſuppreſſing and disbelief of theſe notions, ſo wholly ſtifle them, but that they will be continually riſing up in their minds and purſuing of them.

Now as there is no man whatſoever, that

is wholly freed from these fears, of future misery after death; so there is no Creature below Man, that hath any fears of this kind. And if there be no real ground for this, then must it follow, That he who framed all his other Works with such an excellent congruity, did yet so contrive the nature of Man, the most noble amongst them, as to prove a needless torment and burden to it self.

If it be said, That these notions may proceed from such principles as men have derived from Institution and the teaching of others, but that they do not imply a necessity of any such natural impressions.

To this it may be answered, That it is sufficient to denominate them Natural notions, if they have such a suitableness to the minds of men, as makes them to be generally owned by all those who apply their thoughts to the consideration of them: And that they have such a natural suitableness, may appear, because Institution cannot so easily eradicate these notions, as it can fix them. Now if the meer teaching of others were it self sufficient to impress these notions, without any such peculiar congruity in the things themselves, it would be as sufficient to deface them

them again: Eſpecially conſidering the advantage on this ſide, from that natural repugnancy which we have to any thing which brings diſquiet to our minds. And nothing is more troubleſome in this kind, than the fear which follows upon guilt.

But now, though there have been ſeveral men of no mean abilities, in ſeveral Ages, who have made it their buſineſs to root out of the minds of men all ſuch troubleſome notions about a future ſtate, endeavouring to perſwade themſelves and others, That as there was a time before they were born into the world, when they were not; ſo at their dying or going out of it, they ſhall exiſt no more. And yet, though it be their intereſt to believe this, though they make it their ſtudy and buſineſs to perſwade themſelves and others of it; it may reaſonably be doubted, whether ever yet there hath been ſo much as one perſon, that hath hereby become abſolutely free from theſe fears: But for the moſt part, thoſe who would have them eſteemed vain and imaginary, without any foundation in nature, theſe are the perſons who are moſt aſſaulted with them.

Hi ſunt qui trepidant, & ad omnia fulgura pallent.

So powerful and unconquerable are these impressions, and therefore Natural.

2. The second Reason I proposed to speak to, was from the necessity of this Principle, to the right government of mens lives and actions in this world, and the preserving of society amongst them.

Nothing can be more evident, than that humane Nature is so framed, as not to be regulated and kept within due bounds, without Laws; and Laws must be insignificant, without the sanction of Rewards and Punishments, whereby men may be induced to the observance of them: Now the temporal Rewards and Punishments of this life, cannot be sufficient to this end; and therefore there is a necessity, that there should be another future state of happiness and misery.

All the Rewards and Punishments of this life are to be expected, either from the Civil Magistrate, who by virtue of his Place and Calling is obliged to the duty of distributive Justice: Or else from Divine Providence, according to that most usual course which we find by experience to be observed by him, in his dispensation of these temporal things. Now neither of

of these can afford sufficient motives, for the government of mens lives and actions.

1. Not all that may be expected from the Civil Magistrates, because there may be many good and evil actions which they cannot take notice of; and they can reward and punish only such things, as come under their cognizance. And if this were the only restraint upon men, it could be no hinderance from any such mischiefs or villanies which men had the opportunity of committing secretly. Nor would it extend to those, who had power and strength enough to defend themselves from the Law, and escape the penalty of it, but that such might without any kind of check or fear follow the inclinations of their own appetites: Nor would it afford any remedy in the case of such wicked Magistrates as should invert the order of their institution, proving terrors to well-doers, and encouragers to those that do ill.

2. Not all that may be expected from common Providence: For though it should be granted, that according to the most usual and general course of things, both virtuous and vicious actions are rewarded and punished in this life; yet there may be many particular cases, which this

motive would not reach unto; namely, all ſuch caſes where a mans Reaſon ſhall inform him, that there is far greater probability of ſafety and advantage by committing a ſin, than can be reaſonably expected (according to his experience of the uſual courſe of things in the world) by doing his duty. Suppoſe the caſe of the *three Children*, or of any other called to Martyrdom, who may be threatned with torments and death, unleſs they will blaſpheme God and renounce their Religion; if it appear to them very probable (ſuppoſe a hundred to one), that upon their refuſal, their perſecutors will really execute what they threaten: And if on the other ſide, it prove very improbable (ſuppoſe ten thouſand to one) that they ſhall be delivered by a Miracle: In ſuch caſes, it is not to be expected, that the conſideration of the ordinary courſe of Providence in the diſpenſation of Rewards and Puniſhments, ſhould be ſufficient to reſtrain a man from any kind of Blaſphemy or Villany whatſoever.

But the thing I am ſpeaking to, will more fully appear, by conſideration of thoſe horrid miſchiefs of all kinds, that would moſt naturally follow from the denial of this Doctrine.

If

If there be no ſuch thing to be expected as happineſs or miſery hereafter, why then the only buſineſs that men are to take care of, is their preſent well-being in this World. There being nothing to be counted either good or bad, but in order to theſe: Thoſe things which we conceive to be conducible to it, being the only duties; and all other things that are croſs to it, being the only ſins. And therefore whatever a man's appetite ſhall incline him to, he ought not to deny himſelf in it (be the thing what it will) ſo he can have it, or do it, without probable danger.

Suppoſe it be matter of *gain* or *profit* he is diſpoſed to; if he can cheat or ſteal ſecurely, this will be ſo far from being a fault, that it is plainly his duty, that is, reaſonable for him to do. Becauſe it is a proper means to promote his chief end.

And ſo for other caſes of *anger*, *hatred*, *revenge*, *&c.* According to this principle a man muſt take the firſt opportunity of ſatisfying theſe paſſions, by doing any kind of miſchief to the perſon he is offended with; whether by falſe accuſation and perjury, or (if need be) by poyſoning or ſtabbing of him; provided he can do theſe things ſo, as to eſcape the ſuſpition of others, and humane penalties.

Now let any man judg, what *Bears*, and *Wolves*, and *Devils*, men would prove to one another, if every thing ſhould be not only lawful, but a duty, whereby they might gratifie their impetuous luſts; if they might either perjure themſelves, or ſteal, or murder, as often as they could do it ſafely, and get any advantage by it.

But theſe things are ſo very obvious and undeniable, that the moſt prophane Atheiſtical perſons do own the truth of them. And upon this they are willing to acknowledg, That Religion and the belief of another life, is a very politick invention, and needful for the well-governing of the world, and for the keeping of men in awe, from the doing any ſecret miſchiefs. Which (by the way) is a conceſſion of no ſmall advantage to the honour of Religion, conſidering that it proceeds from the greateſt profeſſed enemies to it. Whereby they grant, that it is fit theſe things ſhould be true, if they are not; or at leaſt, that it is fit that the generality of men ſhould believe them to be true. And though themſelves pretend to believe otherwiſe, yet are they not ſo far out of their wits, as to be willing that thoſe with whom they converſe, their Wives,

Wives, and Children, and Servants, ſhould be of the ſame opinion with them; becauſe then they could have no reaſon to expect any ſafety amongſt them. What ſecurity could any man have of his Eſtate, or Honour, or Life, if ſuch with whom he is moſt familiar and intimate, might think themſelves at liberty to do all the ſecret miſchiefs to them which they had the opportunity to commit?

But there is one thing more, which thoſe who profeſs to disbelieve this principle, ſhould do well to conſider; and that is this, That there is no imaginable reaſon, why (amongſt thoſe that know them) they ſhould pretend to any kind of honeſty or conſcience, becauſe they are wholly deſtitute of all ſuch motives as may be ſufficient to oblige them to any thing of this nature: But according to them, that which is called Virtue and Religion muſt be one of the moſt ſilly and uſeleſs things in the world.

As for the principle of *Honour*, which ſome imagine may ſupply the room of *Conſcience*. This relates only to *external* reputation, and the eſteem which we have amongſt others; and therefore can be of no influence, to reſtrain men from doing any *ſecret* miſchief.

From

From what hath been ſaid it will follow, That thoſe who have any regard to their own ſafety, ought to abandon all kind of ſociety with ſuch pernicious perſons, who according to their own principles, muſt take all opportunities of doing any miſchief to others, which they are able to effect with any advantage to themſelves.

Now if this be ſo (as I have proved), that the nature of man is ſo framed, as not to be effectually perſwaded and wrought upon, without the conſideration of ſuch a future ſtate; if it be neceſſary, to add everlaſting motives, as the Sanctions of that Law, by which the Humane Nature is to be governed; this muſt render it highly credible, that there is ſuch a ſtate, becauſe it muſt needs be very unworthy of God, to conceive of him, that he hath contrived the nature of one of his beſt and moſt noble Creatures after ſuch a manner, as to make it incapable of being governed without falſhood and deceit. The neceſſity of this principle to the government of mens lives and actions, is the ground of that ſaying amongſt the *Rabbins*, That Paradiſe and Hell are two of the ſeven Pillars upon which God is ſaid to have founded the World. As if it could

could not be upheld without such a support.

3. The third and last Argument, I proposed to speak to, was from the necessity of this principle to the vindication of Divine Providence. Nothing is more universally acknowledged, than that God is Good and Just; That well-doing shall be rewarded, and evil actions punished by him. And yet we see, that his dispensations in this life are many times promiscuous and uncertain, so that a man cannot judg *of love or hatred, by all that is before him.* The worst of men are sometimes in the best condition, *If in this life only we had hope, we should be of all men most miserable*, saith the *Apostle*, speaking concerning those primitive times of persecution, when the better any man was, the more was he exposed to suffering. Nor is it thus only in the case of particular persons, or in the success of private differences betwixt men and men; but likewise for some of those decisions that are made by the Sword, in the publick contests of Princes and Nations; these may sometimes be so stated, as to the event of them, as may in the judgment of wise and good men seem unequal, and not

1 Cor. 15. 19.

not according to juſtice and the right of the cauſe.

Now the greater uncertainty there is as to the preſent affairs of this world, by ſo much greater is the certainty of a future Judgment. It is true indeed, that virtue may be ſaid to be a reward to it ſelf, and vice a puniſhment; in regard of that ſatisfaction, or that regret of mind which doth accompany ſuch things. But theſe are not ſuch kind of rewards and puniſhments, as Lawgivers are to take care of; by which they are to excite thoſe under the government, to overcome the labours and difficulties that they may ſometimes meet with in doing their duty, and to reſtrain others from wicked actions.

It would ſeem a wild extravagant Law, which ſhould propoſe by way of Reward, that thoſe who had upon account of Religion or Virtue, undergone any great dangers and troubles, ſhould for their reward be put again to undergo more and greater. That they who had been guilty of Robbery, ſhould by way of puniſhment be obliged to commit Murder.

Beſides thoſe Moral advantages or miſchiefs, which are properly the effects of Virtue and Vice; there is likewiſe ſome Phy-

Physical Good or Evil, that may be expected as the reward and punishment of them.

Would it become a just Governour, to permit his rebellious Subjects, those who contemn his Laws, to persecute such as were obedient to him, with all kind of scorn and violence, stripes, imprisonment, torments, and death it self; and that for this very reason, because they were willing to do their duties, and to observe the Laws? Would it be a reasonable excuse for such a Ruler to say, That one of these had received sufficient, punishment in the very commission of such crimes; and that the other had a sufficient reward, both in the doing of his duty, and in his suffering for it? What could be more inconsistent with the rules of Justice, and the wise ends of Government?

What could be a greater disparagement to Divine Providence, than to permit the calamities and sufferings which good men undergo in this world, many times upon the account of Religion, to pass unrewarded; and the many mischiefs and prophanations, which wicked men take the advantage of committing by their greatness and prosperity

rity in this world, to go unpuniſhed?

What great glory would it be, to preſide over this material World, Stars and Meteors, Sea and Land, Plants and Beaſts, to put theſe things into ſuch a regular courſe as may be ſuitable to their natures, and the operations for which they are deſigned; and in the mean ſpace to have no proportionable regard, either for thoſe that reverence the Deity, or thoſe who contemn him?

'Amyraldus. 'Tis very well ſaid to this purpoſe by a late *Author*, That not to conduct the courſe of Nature in a due manner, might ſpeak ſome defect of Wiſdom in God; but not to compenſate Virtue and Vice, beſides the defect of Wiſdom in not adjuſting things ſuitably to their qualifications, but croſly coupling Proſperity with Vice, and Miſery with Virtue, would argue too great a defect of Goodneſs and of Juſtice. And perhaps it would not be leſs expedient (ſaith he) with *Epicurus*, to deny all Providence, than to aſcribe to it ſuch defects: It being leſs unworthy of the Divine Nature, to neglect the Univerſe altogether, than to adminiſter humane affairs with ſo much injuſtice and irregularity.

And

And therefore 'tis neceſſary for the vindication of Divine Providence, that there ſhould be a future ſtate, and Day of Accounts, wherein every man ſhall be forced to acknowledg, that *verily there is a reward for the righteous, doubtleſs there is a God that judgeth the earth.* Pſa. 58. 11.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Concerning the Duties of Religion naturally flowing from the conſideration of the Divine Nature and Perfections: And firſt, of Adoration *and* Worſhip.

HAving diſpatched the two firſt things I propoſed as the principal Ingredients to a ſtate of Religion, namely, 1. A belief and an acknowledgment of the Divine Nature and Exiſtence. 2. Due apprehenſions of his Excellencies and Perfections. I proceed now to the third, namely, Suitable affections and demeanour towards him. Which muſt naturally follow from the former. The ſerious belief and conſideration of thoſe incomparable Excellencies which there are in the Divine Nature, ought not to be terminated in meer ſpeculation, but muſt derive an influence upon the heart and affections; it being natural for men to proportion their eſteem of things, according to that worth and dignity which they apprehend

to

to be in them. And therefore that Being which hath in it all poſſible Perfections, may juſtly challenge all poſſible eſteem and veneration, as due to it.

In the enumerating of thoſe ſeveral affections and duties, I ſhall obſerve the ſame method which I have formerly uſed in reckoning up the Attributes themſelves.

1. Gods incommunicable Excellencies ſhould diſpoſe our minds to *Adoration* and *Worſhip*.

2. The communicable Attributes, which belong to the Divine

1. *Underſtanding*, namely, his infinite Knowledg and Wiſdom, and his particular Providence, ſhould work in us, *Faith*, *Affiance*, *Hope*, *Confidence*.

2. *Will*, namely, his *Goodneſs*, *Juſtice*, *Faithfulneſs*, are naturally apt to excite in us, *Love*, *Deſire*, *Zeal*.

3. *Faculties of Acting*, namely, his *Power*, which ſhould produce in us *Reverence* and *Fear*: His *Dominion* over us, and diſtributing of future Rewards and Puniſhments, which calls for our *Obedience*, both *Active* and *Paſſive*.

Though I cannot ſay, that each of theſe Affections and Duties are ſo to be reſtrain-

ed to those respective Attributes unto which I have ascribed them, but that the consideration of any of the rest, may have a proper influence to dispose men to any, or to all of them; yet that there is some more peculiar reference and correspondence betwixt these Attributes and these Affections and Duties, as they are here conjoined, I shall endeavour to shew in treating concerning each of them.

1. Those incommunicable and superlative Excellencies of the Divine Nature, whereby God doth infinitely transcend all other Beings, are naturally apt to work in us, a high esteem and admiration of him; a readiness of mind, upon all occasions, to express our *Adoration* and *Worship* towards him.

That *Worship* is due to God, hath been universally acknowledged, in all Ages and Nations. And *Aristotle* asserts, that whosoever doth doubt of, or deny this, ought not to be dealt with by Arguments, but by Punishments. *Topic.* 1. 9.

That it is the Excellency of any Being which is the proper ground of the worship we pay to it, hath been generally acknowledged. The *Philosophers* have owned this. So *Tully*, *Præstans Deorum natu-* *Nat. Deor. lib.* 1.

ra,

ra, &c. "The nature of God may juſtly "challenge the worſhip of men, becauſe "of its ſuperlative Excellency, Bleſſed-"neſs, Eternity. For whatſoever excels, "hath upon that account a veneration due "to it. So *Seneca*, *Deus colitur propter Majeſtatem eximiam, ſingularemq; naturam.* "God is therefore worſhipped, be-"cauſe of his excellent Majeſty and in-"comparable Nature. And to this the Scripture likewiſe doth atteſt. *All nations whom thou haſt made, ſhall come and worſhip before thee, and ſhall glorifie thy name, for thou art great, and doſt wonderous things, thou art God alone.* And again, *Pſal.* 95. 3, having ſaid, *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods*, it is preſently ſubjoined, *O come let us worſhip, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.* And yet again, *Pſal.* 97. 7. *Worſhip him all ye gods*: And the reaſon is given preſently after, *For thou Lord art high above all the earth, thou art exalted far above all gods.* Pſal. 89. 9, 10.

By *Worſhip*, I mean in the general, the higheſt eſteem and admiration of him in our minds, whereby we do continually bow down our ſouls before him, in the acknowledgment of his Excellencies; depending upon him, invoking of him in

our neceſſities, making our acknowledgments to him, as being the Author of all the mercies we enjoy; together with ſuch external ſervices, as may be fit to teſtifie unto others that inward veneration which we have for him, whether by the humbleſt geſtures, of proſtration or bowing ourſelves before him, kneeling, lifting up our hands and eyes unto him; being always ready to *ſpeak good of his Name*, to *make his praiſe glorious*. Which muſt be accompanied with a hearty zeal and indignation, againſt all ſuch things as reflect diſhonour upon him.

Beſides this general habit of *Worſhip*, with which our minds ſhould always be poſſeſſed, there are likewiſe ſome particular actions and ſervices, which by the light of Nature, and the conſent of Nations have been judged proper to expreſs our honouring of him: As the ſetting apart of particular *Perſons*, and *Places*, and *Times*, peculiarly for his Worſhip.

It hath been the general practiſe of all Nations, to have amongſt them a diſtinct calling of men, ſet apart to officiate *in Sacris*, to aſſiſt the people in their publick Worſhip, to inſtruct them in their duties, and to excite them to the performance of them. Which being a work of ſo publick

lick uſefulneſs and general neceſſity, common reaſon will aſſure us, that the beſt way of providing for it, is by ſuch perſons as are bred up to it, and ſet apart for it. Such men are like to have the greateſt *skill*, who have made it their buſineſs and their greateſt *care*, and who are obliged to it by way of Office.

It is natural for men who are joined together in *Civil Societies*, to join likewiſe in *Religious Worſhip*. And in order to this, 'tis neceſſary that there ſhould be publick Places, and ſolemn Times ſet apart for ſuch Aſſemblies. Which hath accordingly been the practice of all civilized Nations. And in the manner of performing their publick Worſhip, it was ſtill required to be done with all imaginable ſubmiſſion and reverence. This the *Stoick* commends, and cites *Ariſtotle* for it; *Egregiè Ariſtoteles ait, nunquam nos verecundiores eſſe debere, quam cum de Diis agitur*, &c. "Men are never more concern-"ed to be humble and modeſt, than when "they have to do about God. We ſhould "enter the Temples, with an humble and "compoſed demeanour. When we ap-"proach to ſacrifice, it ſhould be with all "imaginable expreſſions of reverence and "modeſty, in our countenance and carriage. *Sen. Nat. Qu. lib. 7. cap. 30.*

As for the chief matter and ſubſtance of natural Worſhip, unto which the light of Reaſon will direct, I know no other, than invoking of the Deity, returning thanks to him, and inquiring after his Will. Thoſe things which are ſuperadded to theſe, in that moſt acceptable way of Worſhip revealed in the Goſpel, are not proper to be diſcourſed of here, becauſe they depend meerly upon revelation.

It is true indeed, that all Nations pretending to any Religion, from the moſt ancient times to which any record doth extend, have agreed in the way of worſhip by *Sacrifice*. And from this *general practiſe*, there may ſeem to be ſome ground to infer, this way of worſhip to have been directed by the *light of Nature*. But when 'tis well conſidered, what little ground there is to perſwade a man, left to his own free reaſon, that God ſhould be pleaſed with the killing and burning of Beaſts, or with the deſtroying of ſuch things by Fire of which better uſe might be made, if they were diſpoſed of ſome other way; I ſay, when it is well conſidered, what little reaſon there is to induce ſuch a man to believe, that the killing or burning of Beaſts or Birds, or any other thing uſeful to mankind, ſhould of it ſelf be a proper

and

and natural means to teſtifie our ſubjection to God, or to be uſed by way of expiation from ſin; It will rather appear probable, that the original of this practice was from *Inſtitution*, and that our firſt Parents were by particular revelation inſtructed in this way of worſhip, from whom it was delivered down to their ſucceſſive Generations by verbal Tradition; and by this means was continued in thoſe Families, who departed from the Church, and proved Heathen in the firſt Ages of the world; amongſt whom this Tradition was in courſe of time, for want of care and frequent renewals, corrupted with many humane ſuperinducements, according to the *genius* or intereſts of ſeveral times, or Nations.

As for the Reaſons, why God was pleaſed to inſtitute to his own people this way of worſhip, there are theſe two things may be ſuggeſted.

1. Sacrifices had a typical reference unto that great deſign which was to be accompliſhed in the *fulneſs of time*, by the Sacrifice of Chriſt upon the Croſs, which is at large explained and applied in ſeveral parts of the *New Teſtament*, particularly in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, from whence many ſtrong arguments may now

be deduced, for confirmation of the truth of the Goſpel.

2. Becauſe this way of worſhip was moſt ſuitable to thoſe Ages; the Providence of God having purpoſely adapted his own inſtitutions of worſhip, unto the abilities and capacities of men in ſeveral times. Heb. 1. 1. Diſcovering himſelf to his people in *divers manners*, according to *ſundry times*. And therefore in thoſe firſt and ruder Ages of the world, when people were more generally immerſed in ſenſible things, and ſtood in need of ſomewhat to raiſe and fix their imaginations, God was pleaſed to amuſe them with external pomp and ſolemnities, and to employ that time of their *nonage*, about theſe plainer *rudiments* or Gal. 4. 3. *elements of the world*. But when they were grown up from this *nonage*, when the generality of men became more notional, better able to conſider and abſtract things; when by the ſpreading of the *Roman* Conqueſts, which extended to the moſt conſiderable parts of the world, they had likewiſe ſpread their Arts and Civilities, reducing the Provinces which came under their power, from that ſavageneſs and barbariſm with which they had formerly been overſpread, to the love and de-

deſire of all peaceful Arts, and the ſtudy of all uſeful knowledg, whereby the minds of men were rendered more rational and inquiſitive than before they had been, and conſequently better prepared for the reception of the Chriſtian Religion: In this *fulneſs of time* (as the Scripture ſtyles it) did the Providence of God think fit to introduce Chriſtian Religion, a more rational and ſpiritual way of worſhip, whoſe *Precepts* are moſt agreeable to the pureſt and ſublimeſt reaſon; conſiſting chiefly in a regulation of the mind and ſpirit, and ſuch kind of practices as may promote the good of humane ſociety, and moſt effectually conduce to the perfecting of our natures, and the rendering of them happy.

And that the moſt rational kind of worſhip doth conſiſt in ſuch kind of qualifications and ſervices, beſides the atteſtation of ſeveral Scriptures to this purpoſe, may likewiſe be made evident by the acknowledgment of the wiſeſt Heathens. *Euſebius* quotes *Menander* a *Greek* Poet to this purpoſe, (ſometimes cited by St. *Paul*), *Men do in vain*, ſaith he, *endeavour to make the Gods propitious by their coſtly Sacrifices; if they would have*

Prepar. Evang. lib. 13 cap. 13.

have the Divine favour, let them love and adore God in their hearts, be juſt and holy in their converſations. And in another place, he cites the like ſayings out of *Porphyrie*, in his Book *de Sacrificiis, & Apollonius*, &c.

lib. 4. cap. 13.

Diſſert. 38. So *Maximus Tyrius*, ſpeaking concerning thoſe divers Solemnities wherewith ſeveral Nations did honour their Gods, ſaith, *He would be loth, by denying any of theſe, to derogate from the honour of the Deity; but men ſhould chiefly labour to have him in their minds,* ἴσως μόνον ἐράσσαι μόνον, they ſhould principally endeavour to know him, and to love him.

Epiſt. 95. So *Seneca*, having diſcourſed concerning thoſe external adorations and ceremonies, whereby ſeveral men were wont to expreſs their devotion, he ſays, *Humana ambitio iſtis capitur officiis, Deum colit qui novit*; "Such formalities "may be acceptable to the ambition of "men, but he only can truly worſhip "God who knows him. The firſt ſtep (ſaith he) unto Divine worſhip, is to believe the Being of God, and then to demean our ſelves towards him ſuitably to the greatneſs of his Majeſty. *Vis*

Deos

Deos propitiare, bonus eſto; ſatis illos coluit quiſquis imitatus eſt. "Would you "render him propitious to you, endea- "vour to be good; that man only doth "truly worſhip him, who labours to be "like him. So *Tully*, *Cultus autem Deorum eſt optimus, idemque caſtiſſimus, atque ſanctiſſimus, pleniſſimuſque pietatis, ut eos ſemper purâ, integrâ, incorruptâ mente & voce veneremur.* *De Nat. Deorum, lib. 2.*

To which I ſhall only add that ſaying of *Perſius*, where he prefers an honeſt and a virtuous mind, above all other coſtly Sacrifices and Offerings. *Satyr. 2.*

Compoſitum jus faſque animi, ſanctoſque receſſus
Mentis, & incoctum generoſo pectus honeſto,
Hæc cedo, ut admoveam templis, & farre litabo.

If true worſhip did conſiſt only in coſtly Sacrifices, then ſuch alone as were rich, could be religious; whereas God is more ready to accept the meaneſt Offering, from a perſon of a juſt and worthy and generous mind, who doth truly love and devote himſelf to him, than of the moſt pom-

pompous coſtly Sacrifices from others.

And thus have I done treating of thoſe kind of affections, which naturally follow from due apprehenſions of the *incommunicable* Attributes belonging to the Divine nature, namely, *adoration* and *worſhip*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Faith *or* Affiance *in God.*

I Proceed to those other affections whereby we are to give unto God (so far as Creatures are capable) that honour which is due to those communicable perfections belonging to the Divine *Understanding*, *Will*, *Faculties of Acting*, namely, his *Wisdom*, *Goodness*, *Power*, *Dominion*, and superiority over us, and his *distribution of future Rewards and Punishments*; which should respectively excite in us, *Affiance*, *Love*, *Reverence*, and *Obedience*, both *active* and *passive*. And though each of these graces, have sufficient foundation in every one of the Divine excellencies promiscuously, yet there is some more peculiar reference and correspondence amongst them, according to this order.

I purpose to speak to each of them, severally and briefly.

First, Concerning *Affiance*; by which I mean an acquiescence of the mind, whereby it is supported against all unnecessary doubts

doubts and fears, upon account of the Divine All-ſufficiency in general, with more ſpecial reſpect to his Knowledg and Wiſdom and Providence, whereby he doth take notice of our conditions, and is able to order all things for the beſt, and doth not permit any thing to befall us without his knowledg of it, and being concerned for it. This Grace, according to its different relations, is uſually diſtinguiſhed into theſe three branches: 1. As it reſpects an act of the judgment in aſſenting to all divine truths, whether diſcoverable by Reaſon or by Revelation, ſo 'tis ſtyled *Faith*. 2. As it imports a reſting of the will and affections in the Divine goodneſs, whether diſcovered to us by the light of nature or by revelation, ſo 'tis ſtyled *Truſt*; and according to the greater meaſure or degree of it, *Confidence* and *Plerophory*. So the Heathen, who have no revelation, can ſupport themſelves in their ſufferings for that which is good, with the conſideration that God will take care of them. 3. As it relates to the expectation and deſire after ſome future *good* which we ſtand in need of, or the eſcaping of ſome *evil* we are obnoxious unto, ſo 'tis ſtyled *Hope*. But I ſhall treat of theſe promiſcuouſly, becauſe they agree in the general na-

nature of Affiance. And how reaſonable and proper this *affiance* in God is, will appear from theſe conſiderations.

1. 'Tis neceſſary to our preſent ſtate in this world, that there ſhould be ſomething for us, to lean upon, and have recourſe unto, as our ſupport and refuge.

2. God alone is an all-ſufficient ſtay, upon which the mind of man can ſecurely repoſe it ſelf in every condition.

1. 'Tis neceſſary to our preſent ſtate in this world, that there ſhould be ſomething for us to lean upon, and have recourſe unto, as our ſupport and refuge. This the ancient *Poets* have ſignified in their fable of *Pandora*'s Box, which when *Epimetheus* had opened, and ſaw all manner of evils flying out of it, he ſuddenly cloſed it again, and ſo kept in *Hope* at the bottom of it, as being the only remedy left to mankind, againſt all thoſe evils to which they are obnoxious. Every man at his beſt eſtate, is but a feeble infirm creature; what from the impotence of his mind, and the diſorder of his paſſions from *within*; together with the troubles and difficulties that he ſhall meet withall from *without*; the great obſcurity which there is in the nature of things, that uncertainty which attends the iſſues and events

vents of them; the mutability of all humane affairs, which cannot possibly be secured by all the imaginable wisdom and foresight which men are capable of. From all which it sufficiently appears, that *faith* and *hope* and *trust* are altogether necessary to the state of men in this world; and that they must always be in an unsafe, unquiet condition, unless they have somewhat to support and relieve them in their exigences. 'Tis observed of the *Hopp*, and other such climbing Plants, which are not of strength enough to bear up themselves, that they will by natural instinct lean towards and clasp about any thing that is next, which may help to bear them up; and in the want of a Tree or a Pole, which is their proper support, they will wind about a Thistle or a Nettle, or any other Weed, though in the issue it will help to choak and destroy the growth of them, instead of furthering it. The application is easie, *All flesh is grass, and the glory thereof, as the flower of the field*, of a fading impotent condition, standing in need of something without it self for its protection and support. And a mistake in the choice of such helps, may sometimes prove fatal. Our conditions in this world are often in *Scripture* represented by a

Isa. 40. 6.

state

ſtate of *warfare*, wherein the virtues of *Faith* and *Hope* are ſaid to be our *Breſt-plate*, our *Shield*, and our *Helmet*, the chief defenſive arms, whereby we are to be guarded againſt all aſſaults. And ſometimes by a ſtate travelling by Sea, wherein *Hope* is our *Anchor*, that which muſt fix and keep us ſteddy in the midſt of all ſtorms. 1 Theſ. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 17. Heb. 6. 19.

2. God alone is an all-ſufficient ſtay, upon which the mind of man can ſecurely repoſe it ſelf in every condition. For which reaſon he is in the *Scripture* phraſe ſtyled the *Hope of Iſrael*, the *confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of ſuch as are afar off upon the Sea, the God of Hope*. Which Titles he hath been pleaſed to aſſume unto himſelf, to teach us this leſſon, *that our Faith and Hope ſhould be in God*. Pſal. 65. 5. Prov. 3. 26. Rom. 15. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 21.

The principal conditions requiſite in that perſon, who is fit to be a proper object of our confidence are theſe four:

1. Perfect knowledg and wiſdom, to underſtand our conditions, and what may be the moſt proper helps and remedies for them.

2. Unqueſtionable goodneſs, love, faithfulneſs, to be concerned for us, and to take care of us.

3. Sufficient power, to relieve us in every condition.

4. Everlastingness, that may reach to us and our posterity to all generations. All which are only to be found in God. From whence it will appear, that as he is the only proper object of our trust, so by not-trusting in him, we do deny to him the honour which is due to these Divine excellencies, and consequently are deficient in one of the chief parts of Religion.

1. He alone hath perfect knowledg and wisdom to understand our conditions, and what may be the most proper remedy for them. *His understanding is infinite.* Our most secret thoughts and inward groanings are not hid from him. He knows our diseases, and what Physick is fittest for us, the best means of help, and the most fitting season to apply those means. He is infinitely wise to contrive such ways of safety and deliverance, as will surmount all those difficulties and perplexities which would put humane wisdom to a loss. He doth sometimes accomplish his ends without any visible means; *filling mens bellies with his hid treasure*, making them to thrive and prosper in the world, by such secret ways as men understand not. And

Psal. 147. 5.

Psa. 17. 14.

some-

ſometimes he doth blaſt the moſt likely means, ſo that the *battel is not to the ſtrong, nor yet bread to the wiſe, nor riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of skill*; but it may happen to them, as the *Prophet* ſpeaks, that though *they ſow much, yet they bring in but little, they eat and have not enough, they drink but are not filled, they are clothed but not warm, earn wages but put it into a bag with holes.* And therefore upon this account, there is very good reaſon why God ſhould be the object of our *confidence.* Eccleſ. 9. 11. Hag. 1. 6.

2. He is likewiſe infinite as to his Goodneſs, Love, Truth, Faithfulneſs, whereby he is concerned for our welfare, and doth take care for us. The neareſt and deareſt relations which we have in the world, in whom we have moſt reaſon to be confident, *Our father and mother may forſake us*: And as for ſuch whom we have obliged by all imaginable kindneſs, they may deal deceitfully with us, and prove like *winter brooks*, which in wet ſeaſons, when there is no need of them, will run with a torrent, but are quite vaniſhed in a time of drought. Whilſt we are in a proſperous condition they will be forward to apply themſelves to us, with great profeſſions of kindneſs and zeal; but if our condition Pſa. 27. 10. Job 6. 15.

prove any way declining, they preſently fall off and become ſtrangers, forgetting and renouncing all obligations of friendſhip and gratitude, rather than run the leaſt hazard or trouble to do us a kindneſs. That man hath had but little experience in the world, to whom this is not very evident. But now the mercy and goodneſs of God *is over all his works*, and more eſpecially extended to ſuch as are in a ſtate of miſery, the *fatherleſs* and *widows*, the *priſoners*, the *poor*, and the *ſtranger. He is the helper of the friendleſs.* That which amongſt men is uſually the chief occaſion to take off their affection and kindneſs, namely, miſery and affliction, is a principal argument to entitle us to the favour of God, and therefore is frequently made uſe of by good men in H. *Scripture* to that purpoſe. *O go not far from me, for trouble is nigh at hand, and there is none to help me; I am in miſery, O hear me ſpeedily.*

Pſal. 68. 5.
145. 14.
146. 9.
Pſal. 10. 14.
Pſal. 22. 11.

3. He is of infinite Power, for our relief and ſupply in every condition; being able to *do whatſoever he pleaſeth both in heaven and in earth, and in the ſea, and in all deep places.* He is the firſt cauſe of every thing, both as to its being and operation. We depend wholly upon his power,

Pſal 135. 6.

not

not only for the iſſues and events of things, but likewiſe for the means. And therefore 'tis in *Scripture* made an argument why we ſhould not truſt in riches, or in any worldly thing, *becauſe power belongs to God.* And 'tis elſewhere urged for a reaſon why we ſhould *truſt in the Lord for ever, becauſe in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength.* And upon this conſideration *Abraham* is ſaid to have *hoped againſt hope*, being *fully perſwaded that what God had promis'd he was able to perform.*

Pſa. 62. 10, 11.

Iſa. 26. 4.

Rom. 4. 18, 21.

4. He is everlaſting, whereas all other helps and comforts which we can propoſe to our ſelves are tranſient and fading. *As for our fathers, where are they? And do the Prophets*, or Princes, *live for ever?* Their days upon earth are a ſhadow that fleeteth away, *their breath goeth forth, and they return to the earth, and then all their thoughts periſh:* Whereas he is from everlaſting to everlaſting, God bleſſed for ever; and his righteouſneſs extendeth to childrens children, even to all generations. We ſee by daily experience, perſons of great hopes and expectations, when their Patrons dye upon whom they had their dependance, to what a forlorn and helpleſs condition they are reduced: But now this can never

Zech. 1. 5.

Jer. 17. 7. ver befall the man *who truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is.* And 'tis one of the greateſt priviledges of Religion, that it doth furniſh a man with ſuch a ſure refuge and ſupport againſt all kind of exigences, whereby he may bear up his ſpirit under thoſe difficulties wherewith others are overwhelmed.

'Tis true indeed, it cannot be denied, but that God doth expect, and the nature of things doth require, that men ſhould be ſuitably affected with joy or ſorrow, according as their conditions are; but yet with this difference, that thoſe who believe the Providence of God, ſhould not be ſo deeply affected with theſe things as other men, they ſhould *weep as not weeping, and rejoice as not rejoicing.* They ſhould not upon any occaſion fear or ſorrow as *men without hope*, but ſhould demean themſelves as perſons that have an higher principle to be acted by, and to live upon, than any of theſe ſenſible things.

I cannot omit to ſuggeſt one Obſervation concerning this duty of *Affiance*, which I have now been inſiſting upon; That though this particular virtue, and others of the like affinity, be evidently *moral duties*, our obligation to them being clearly deducible from the light of nature and

and the principles of reaſon, and conſequently muſt be owned by the Heathen Philoſophers; yet they do in their Writings, ſpeak but ſparingly, concerning thoſe kind of virtues which are of a more ſpiritual nature, and tend moſt to the elevating and refining of the mind. And on the other ſide, the Scripture doth moſt of all inſiſt upon the excellency and neceſſity of theſe kind of graces. Which is one of the main differences, betwixt the Scripture and other moral Writings. And for this reaſon it is, that in ſpeaking of theſe graces and virtues, I do more frequently allude to Scripture expreſſions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Love *of God.*

SEcondly, As for thoſe *perfections* belonging to the Divine *Will*, namely, his *Goodneſs*, his *Juſtice*, his *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs*: The due apprehenſion of theſe, ſhould excite in us the virtue of *Love*, with all the genuine fruits of it. By *Love*, I mean an eſteeming of him, and a ſeeking after him as our only happineſs.

So that there are two ingredients of this virtue of *Love*, Eſtimation and Choice.

1. An *Eſtimation* of the judgment; a due valuation of thoſe excellencies which are in the Divine nature, whereby we look upon God as the ſupreme Being *in genere boni*: From whom all created goodneſs is derived, and by conformity to whom it is to be meaſured. And this notion is the proper importance of the word *Charity*, whereby we account a thing dear or pretious. And in this ſenſe doth our Saviour oppoſe *deſpiſing* to *loving*, *Either* Mat. 6. 24. *he muſt hate the one, and love the other*; *or*

or he muſt hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other.

Now theſe perfections of the Divine nature may be conſidered, either abſolutely or relatively.

1. *Abſolutely*, as they are in themſelves, abſtracting from any benefit that we our ſelves may have by them. And in this ſenſe they can only produce in us an eſteem of our judgments, without any deſire or zeal in our will or affections. The Devil doth underſtand theſe abſolute perfections of the Divine nature, that God is in himſelf moſt wiſe, moſt juſt, and powerful: And he knows withal that theſe things are good, deſerving eſteem and veneration; and yet he doth not love God for theſe perfections, becauſe he himſelf is evil, and is not like to receive any benefit by them.

2. *Relatively*, with reference to that advantage which may arrive to us from the Divine goodneſs. When men are convinced of their infinite need of him, and their miſery without him; and that their utmoſt felicity doth conſiſt in the enjoyment of him: This is that which properly provokes affection and deſire, namely, his relative goodneſs as to us. There is ſcarce any one under ſuch tranſports of love,

love, as to believe the perſon whom he loves, to be in all reſpects the moſt virtuous, wiſe, beautiful, wealthy that is in the world. He may know many others, that do in ſome, if not in all theſe reſpects, exceed. And yet he hath not an equal love for them, becauſe he hath not the ſame hopes of attaining an intereſt in them, and being made happy by them. So that this Virtue doth properly conſiſt in ſuch a kind of eſteem, as is withal accompanied with a hope and belief of promoting our own happineſs by them. And this is properly the true ground and original of our love to God. From whence will follow

2. Our *choice* of him, as being the only proper object of our happineſs, preferring him before any thing elſe that may come in competition with them. Not only (as the Scripture expreſſeth it) loving him *above father and mother*, but *hating father and mother, yea and life it ſelf for his ſake: Counting all other things but droſs and dung*, in compariſon of him.

Mat. 10. 3. Luk. 14. 26. Philem. 3.

Now it cannot otherwiſe be, but that a due apprehenſion of the Divine excellencies in general, eſpecially of his particular goodneſs to us, muſt excite in the ſoul ſuitable affections towards him. And hence

hence it is, that the miſapprehenſion of the Divine nature, as to this Attribute, doth naturally produce in men that kind of ſuperſtition ſtyled δεισιδαιμονία, which imports a frightful and over-timorous notion of the Deity, repreſenting God as auſtere and rigorous, eaſily provoked by every little circumſtantial miſtake, and as eaſily appeaſed again by any flattering and ſlight formalities. Not but that there is ſufficient evidence from the principles of natural reaſon, to evince the contrary; but the true ground of their miſtake in this matter, is from their own vitious and corrupt affections. 'Tis moſt natural for ſelfiſh and narrow men, to make themſelves the rule and meaſure of perfection in other things. And hence it is, that according as a mans own inclinations are, ſo will he be apt to think of God; *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf.* Thoſe that are of ill natures and of little minds, whoſe thoughts are fixed upon ſmall and low matters, laying greater weight upon circumſtances, ſalutes, addreſſes, than upon the real worth of perſons and ſubſtantial duties, being themſelves apt to be provoked unto wrath and fierceneſs, upon the omiſſion of theſe leſſer circumſtances, and to be pacified again

Pſa. 50. 21.

again by any flattering and formal ſervices; ſuch men muſt conſequently think themſelves obliged to deal juſt ſo towards God, as they expect that others ſhould deal with them. And according to the different natures and tempers of thoſe men who do miſtake this notion of the Divine goodneſs, ſo are the effects and conſequences of this miſtake various (as a learned man hath well obſerved) When it meets with *ſtout* and *ſturdy* natures, who are under a conſciouſneſs of guilt, it works them to Atheiſm, hardens them to an oppoſition of him, to an endeavour of undermining and deſtroying the notion of that Deity, by whom they are not like to be ſafe or happy. If with more *ſoft* and *timorous* natures, men of baſe and ſlaviſh minds, it puts ſuch men on to flatter and collogue with him, and to propitiate his favour by their zeal in leſſer matters. And though in this kind of temper and carriage there may be a ſhew of Religion, yet the terminating of it in ſuch things is moſt deſtructive to the nature of it, rendring all converſe with the Deity irkſom and grievous, begetting a kind of forced and præternatural zeal, inſtead of that inward love and delight, and thoſe other genuine kindly advantages which ſhould ariſe

Mr. *Smith* of Superſtition.

ariſe to the ſoul from an internal frame of Religion.

And that the perfections of the Divine nature, and particularly his Goodneſs, ſhould excite our love of him, may be made evident by all kind of proofs. There being no kind of motive to affection, whether *imaginary* or *real*, but 'tis infinitely more in God than in any thing elſe beſides. I ſhall mention only theſe three things.

1. His abſolute goodneſs and excellency.

2. His relative goodneſs and kindneſs to us.

3. The neceſſity we are under of being utterly loſt and undone, without an intereſt in his favour.

1. His abſolute perfections are infinite, being the original of all that good which we behold in other things. Whatever attractives we find diffuſed amongſt other creatures, by which they are rendred amiable, they are all derived from him, and they are all, in compariſon to him, but as little drops to the Ocean. There is much of lovelineſs in the fabrick of this beautiful world, the *glorious Sun, the Moon and the Stars which he hath ordained*; which is abundantly enough to ren-

der

der the notion and the *name of him excellent in all the earth.* We may perhaps know ſome particular perſons ſo very eminent for all kind of accompliſhments, *virtue*, and *wiſdom*, and *goodneſs*, &c. as to contract an eſteem and veneration from all that know them. But now the higheſt perfections that are in men, beſides that they are derived from him, are ſo infinitely diſproportionable to his, that they may be ſaid not to be in any of the creatures. There is ſome kind of communicated goodneſs, and wiſdom, and power, and immortality in men; and yet theſe perfections are in Scripture appropriated to the Divine nature in ſuch a manner, as if
Mat. 19. 7. no Creature did partake of them. *There is*
1 Tim. 1. 17. *none good*, or *wiſe*, but he. He is the
ch. 6. 15, 16. *only Potentate; who only hath immortality.* No man can take a ſerious view of the works he hath wrought, whether they concern Creation or Providence, but he muſt needs acknowledg, concerning the Author of them, that he is altogether love-
Zech. 9. 17 ly, and ſay with the *Prophet*, *How great is his goodneſs? and how great is his bounty?* The comelineſs of them is upon all accounts ſo eminent and conſpicuous, as cannot but be owned by every one who conſiders them. For any man to ask, what

what Beauty is, this is τέρας ἐρώτημα, as *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks, the queſtion of a blind man. Every man who hath eyes, may judg of it at firſt view. Not to diſcern it, is a ſure argument of blindneſs and darkneſs. And that the Divine nature is not more amiable to us, ſhews the great imperfection of our preſent condition. It ſhall be the perpetual employment of our future ſtate in heaven, to celebrate theſe excellencies of the Divine nature. The bleſſed Angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, do receive a chief part of their felicity, by contemplating theſe Divine perfections in the beatifical viſion.

2. His relative goodneſs and kindneſs to us; teſtified in ſo many particulars, that *when we would reckon them up, they are more in number than the ſand.* Pſal. 100. 3. He is the Author of our beings and our well-beings. *It is he that made us, and not we our ſelves.* Pſal. 23. *He ſpreads our tables, and fills our cups, in him we live, and move, and have our beings.* He doth *daily follow us, compaſs us about, load us with his beneſits.* He *gives* us all that we *enjoy*, and he is willing upon our repentance to *forgive* us all that we *offend*. *And to whom much is given*, or *forgiven, they ſhould love much.*

To

To love them that love us, is a duty but of a low attainment, *the Publicans and ſinners do the ſame*; nay, the very Beaſts will do it, *The Oxe knows his owner, and the Aſs his maſters crib.* That perſon muſt be void of the reaſon of a man, who will not admire and love God for his Excellencies; but he that doth not love him for his kindneſs, muſt be more ſtupid and ſenſeleſs than the brute creatures.

3. We are utterly undone, without an intereſt in his favour. So that if the apprehenſion of his *abſolute* goodneſs cannot work upon our *reaſon*, nor the ſenſe of his *relative* goodneſs or kindneſs upon our *ingenuity* and *gratitude*; yet the conſideration of our undone eſtate without him, ought to prevail with all ſuch, as have not forfeited the firſt and moſt univerſal principle of ſelf-preſervation. The not having him for our friend, and much more the having him for our enemy, putting a man into an abſolute incapacity of all kind of happineſs. 'Tis a queſtion propoſed by St. *Auſtin*, why we are ſo often in Scripture enjoyned to love God and our neighbours, but have no-where any precept commanding us to love our ſelves? To which he gives this anſwer, *Fingi non poteſt major dilectio ſui, quàm dilectio Dei*; "The

"The higheſt and trueſt ſelf-love, is to "love that which can alone make us happy. Men do not need any motive or argument to perſwade them to love themſelves. 'Tis a *natural principle*, rather than a *moral duty*; they muſt do ſo, nor can they do otherwiſe. Only this is that wherein they ſtand in greateſt need of direction, how to ſet this natural principle on work upon its due object. Felicity muſt be every mans chief end, there is no need of perſwading any one to that; all the difficulty is to convince men, wherein this happineſs doth conſiſt. And there is no rational conſidering man, but muſt needs grant it to be in the fruition of the firſt and ſupreme good; ſo that to love God as our happineſs is to love our ſelves, beyond which there is nothing to be ſaid or fancyed by way of motive or perſwaſion.

'Tis a duty this, upon all accounts, ſo plain and reaſonable, that no man whatſoever can pretend to any kind of doubt or diſpute about it. And therefore I ſhall add no more by way of proof or confirmation of the neceſſity of it.

I ſhall only offer two conſiderations, which ſhould engage mens utmoſt diligence and caution in this matter.

1. 'Tis a buſineſs of greateſt conſequence, to know whether we truly love God.

2. 'Tis a matter wherein we are very liable to miſtake.

1. 'Tis a buſineſs of unſpeakable concernment, to underſtand whether we love God or not: It being the ſame thing as to enquire, whether there be any thing in us of true Religion, or not. 'Tis not a queſtion about the fruits or the branches, but about the root; not about the degrees, but about the very eſſence of grace and holineſs. There being no *medium* betwixt loving God and hating of him. *He that is not with me, is againſt me*, (ſaith our *Saviour*), *Luke* 11. 23.

2. And then 'tis a matter wherein men are liable to miſtake. There is naturally *in all Nations of men, who dwell on the face of the earth*, a kind of confuſed inclination towards God, *whereby they ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. Acts 17. 27. And men are apt to miſtake this natural propenſion for the grace of Love; whereas this is rather an inclination, than a firm choice and reſolution; rather a natural diſpoſition, than an acquired or infuſed habit. None could have more confident perſwaſions of their love to God, and their

their zeal for him, than the *Jews* had; and yet our *Saviour* tells them, *But I know you, that you have not the love of God in you.* 'Tis not an outward profeſſion, though accompanied with zeal, that is a ſufficient argument of our love. Though there are many in the world, who both live and dye under this deluſion, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name, and in thy name have caſt out Devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works. And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you, depart from me you that work iniquity.* 'Tis not the being gifted and called, for theſe extraordinary works of propheſying and miracles; 'tis not an ability to undergo the flames of martyrdom, and the giving our bodies to be burned: Neither gifts nor priviledges, nor ſome particular acts of duty, though of the moſt noble kind and greateſt difficulty, can be a ſufficient evidence of this love. So that 'tis a matter wherein men are very liable to miſtake, and where a miſtake will prove of infinite conſequence. And therefore will it concern us, to be very conſiderate and cautious in our enquiry about it. Joh. 5. 42.

There is one kind of affection ſeated in

the *rational* part of the ſoul, the *underſtanding* and *will*; and another in the *ſenſitive*, the *fancy* and *appetite*. The one conſiſting in a full conviction, deliberate choice, and firm reſolution; the other conſiſting more in ſome ſudden *impetus* and tranſport of deſire after a thing. The firſt of theſe may be ſtyled the *virtue*, the other the *paſſion* of love. Now though a man ſhould, in ſome fits of devotion, love God with as great a degree of fervor, as to paſſionate ſenſitive love, as ſome *Martyrs* have done; yet were it poſſible for him in his judgment, to eſteem any thing elſe but equally, or never ſo little more than God; ſuch a kind of affection, though it were ſufficient to make the other a Martyr, yet could not preſerve him from being an Apoſtate, and renouncer or blaſphemer of Religion (as a learned *Author* hath proved more at large); nay, I add further, from the ſame *Author*, though a man ſhould love God with an equal degree of affection, yet becauſe the objects are ſo infinitely diſproportionable, and 'tis the nature of moral duties to be meaſured from thoſe motives by which we are to be induced to them; therefore of ſuch an one it may be affirmed, that he doth not love God. He that makes him

Mr. *Pinke.*

him but equal to any worldly thing, may be ſaid infinitely to deſpiſe and undervalue him.

For the further explication of this, I ſhall ſuggeſt to you a diſtinction, not commonly (if at all) taken notice of by others, betwixt *natural principles* and *moral duties*. The miſunderſtanding of which is the occaſion of many difficulties and confuſions, about this and ſome other points.

1. By *natural principles*, I mean ſuch kind of impreſſions as are originally ſtamped upon the nature of things, whereby they are fitted for thoſe ſervices to which they are deſigned in their creation; the acts of which are neceſſary, and under no kind of liberty of being ſuſpended: All things muſt work according to their natural principles, nor can they do otherwiſe; as heavy bodies muſt tend downwards. The beauty of the world, and the wiſdom of the Creation, is generally acknowledged to conſiſt in this, that God was pleaſed to endue the kinds of things, with ſuch natures and principles, as might accommodate them for thoſe works to which they were appointed. And he governs all things by ſuch laws, as are ſuited to thoſe ſeveral natures which he had at

firſt implanted in them. The moſt univerſal principle belonging to all kind of things, is ſelf-preſervation, which in man (being a rational Agent) is ſomewhat farther advanced to ſtrong propenſions and deſires of the ſoul after a ſtate of happineſs, which hath the predominancy over all other inclinations, as being the ſupreme and ultimate end, to which all their deſigns and actions muſt be ſubſervient by a natural neceſſity.

2. Whereas on the other hand, thoſe rules or means which are moſt proper for the attaining of this end, about which we have a liberty of acting, to which men are to be induced in a moral way, by ſuch kind of motives or arguments as are in themſelves ſufficient to convince the reaſon: Theſe I call *moral duties*; *duties*, as deriving their obligation from their conducibility to the promoting of our chief end; and *moral*, as depending upon moral motives. So that ſelf-love, and the propoſing of happineſs as our chief end, though it be the foundation of duty, that *baſis* or *ſubſtratum* upon which the Law is founded, yet it is not properly a moral duty, about which men have a liberty of acting. They muſt do ſo, nor can they do otherwiſe. The moſt vile and profligate

gate wretches that are, who are moſt oppoſite to that which is their true happineſs, they are not againſt happineſs it ſelf, but they miſtake about it, and erroneouſly ſubſtitute ſomething elſe in the room of it. So that if men were upon all accounts firmly convinced, that God was their chief happineſs, they would almoſt as neceſſarily love him, as hungry men do eat, and thirſty men do drink. I have enlarged ſomewhat the more upon this particular, the better to manifeſt the true cauſe or ground of this love, to conſiſt in this perſwaſion, that our chief happineſs is in the favour of God, and the enjoyment of him.

CHAP. XV.

Of Reverence *and the* Fear *of God.*

THirdly, As for those kind of affections, which should be wrought in us, more especially from the apprehension of the *Divine Power*; these are *reverence*, *fear*, *humility*, a submissive and filial awe, which is so suitable to the notion of Omnipotence, and so necessary a consequence from it, as not to be separated.

By this *reverence*, I mean, such an humble, aweful, and ingenuous regard towards the Divine nature, proceeding from a due esteem and love of him, whereby we are rendred unwilling to do any thing which may argue contempt of him, or which may provoke and offend him. 'Tis a duty which we owe to such as are in a superior relation, and is in the fifth Commandment enjoined under the name of *Honour*; which in the notion of it doth imply a mixture of *Love* and *Fear*, and in the object of it doth suppose *Goodness* and *Power*. That power which is hurtful to men, and devoid

void of goodneſs, may raiſe in their minds a dread and terror, but not a reverence and an honour. And therefore all ſuch doctrines as aſcribe unto God what is harſh, and rigorous, and unworthy of his infinite goodneſs, inſtead of this *filial*, do beget a *ſervile* fear in men. This is the meaning of that citation in St. *Auſtin*, where he mentions it as *Varro*'s judgment, *Deum a religioſo vereri, a ſuperſtitioſo timeri.* The paſſion of fear and dread belongs to ſuperſtitious perſons, but the virtue of reverence to thoſe that are religious. And that of *Seneca*, *Deos nemo ſanus timet, furor enim eſt metuere ſalutaria, nec quiſquam amat quos timet.* No man in his right mind will fear God in this ſenſe; 'tis no leſs than madneſs to have frightful apprehenſions of that which is moſt benign and beneficial; nor can true love conſiſt with this kind of fear. *Benefic.* lib. 4. cap. 19. *Epiſt.* 123.

But as for this reverence, or filial fear, it is ſo eſſential to a ſtate of Religion, that not only the Scripture, but the *heathen Moraliſts* likewiſe do deſcribe Religion it ſelf by this very name of *fearing God.* And men who are pious and devout, are by the *Gentiles* ſtyled ἐυλαβῆς and and φοβέμενοι, men of reverence and fear.

Now though every one of the Divine per-

perfections may justly challenge this affection as due to it, particularly his infinite *wisdom* and *goodness*, yet doth it more particularly belong to his *power*. I shall speak briefly of each of these.

1. For his *infinite knowledg* and *wisdom*, which are things that have been always counted venerable. He knows all our infirmities and most secret faults, and therefore ought to be feared upon that account. 'Tis a notable saying in *Cicero* to this purpose; *Quis non timeat omnia providentem & cogitantem, & animadvertentem, & omnia ad se pertinere putantem, curiosum & plenum negotii Deum.* "Who would not fear that God who "sees and takes notice of all things, so "curious and full of business, as to have "a particular concern for every action "and person in the world. And in another place he makes this notion of the Deity, and the fear consequent thereupon, to be the chief *basis* of Government, the first foundation of that civil policy whereby men are gathered together and preserved in regular societies. *Sit persuasum civibus, Deos, qualis quisque sit, quid in se admittat, quâ mente, quâ pietate religiones colat, intueri; piorumq; & impiorum habere rationem.* "This is one of the

De Legib. lib. 2.

"the first principles, which men who "would associate under government, ought "to be convinced of, that God takes par- "ticular notice, what kind of person eve- "ry one is, with what mind and devo- "tion he applies himself to the duties of "Religion, and will deal with men accor- "ding as they are pious or impious. From whence will follow, such a fear of offend- ing him by any dishonest action, as must make men capable of living under go- vernment.

2. His *goodness*, *holiness*, *kindness*, and *mercy*, do afford another reason why he ought to be feared; though these are the most immediate objects of our love and joy, yet will they likewise afford ground for our reverence. We read in one Text, of *fearing the Lord and his goodness*; which Hosea 3. 5. is, when men have such a sense of his good- ness, as thereby to be affected with an holy awe and fear of offending him. And elsewhere 'tis said, *There is forgive-* Psal. 130. *ness with him, that he ought to be fear-* 4. *ed.* The meaning of which place may be this, We stand in continual need of pardon and remission, being utterly un- done without it; and God only doth give this, and therefore upon this account we ought to reverence and fear him.

3. This

3. This duty doth more eſpecially refer to that Attribute of his *power*, together with the effects of it, in the *judgments* which he executes in the world. Now nothing is more natural to men, than to fear ſuch as have power over them, and are able to help or to hurt them. The Civil Magiſtrate is to be feared and reverenced upon this account, becauſe
Rom. 13. *he bears the ſword, and is a revenger*: Much more the ſupreme Governour of the world. Men *can but kill the body*, and after that muſt dye themſelves; but God lives for ever, and can puniſh for
Mat. 10. 18 ever; he can *caſt both body and ſoul into hell*: And therefore we have very great reaſon to fear him. 'Tis mentioned in Scripture, as one of thoſe Attributes and Titles whereby the Divine nature is de-
Pſa. 76. 11. ſcribed, *The fear of Iſrael, He that ought to be feared.* And that by thoſe who need not to fear others, the Princes and Potentates of the world. Thoſe very perſons, whom others are moſt afraid of, ought themſelves to ſtand in fear of him;
v. 12. for *he cuts off the ſpirits of Princes, and is terrible to the Kings of the earth*, as it follows in that place.

The great prejudice which ignorant men have againſt this affection of *fear*, is, that

that it is a check and reſtraint to a man in his liberty, and conſequently brings diſquiet to his mind; which is ſo far from truth, that on the contrary it may be manifeſted, that one of the greateſt priviledges belonging to a ſtate of Religion, doth ariſe from this true fear of God, as being that which muſt ſet us at liberty from all other tormentful fears. That which hath the greateſt influence upon the troubles and diſcontents of men in the world, whereby their conditions are rendred uncomfortable, is their inordinate fear, thoſe miſgiving thoughts and ſurmiſes, whereby they are apt to multiply their own dangers, and create needleſs troubles to themſelves. And whatever a mans outward condition may be, as to the ſecurity and flouriſhing of it, yet whilſt ſuch fears are in his mind, *His ſoul doth* Pſa. 25. 13. *not dwell at eaſe*, as the phraſe is; whereas, *he that fears the Lord, his ſoul ſhall dwell at eaſe, i.e.* ſuch an one need not be afraid of any thing elſe. *Diſcat timere, qui non vult timere; diſcat ad tempus eſſe ſolicitus qui vult eſſe ſemper ſecurus*, ſaith St. *Auſtin*; "He that would not fear "other things, let him learn to fear God; "let him be cautious and ſolicitous for a "time, that would be everlaſtingly ſecure.

And

And in another place, *Homo time Deum & minantem mundum ridebis*; "O man, "learn to fear God, and thou wilt deſpiſe "the threatnings of the world. And again, *Exhorreſce quod minatur Omnipotens, ama quod promittit Omnipotens, & vileſcet mundus ſive promittens ſive terrens*; "He that hath a true fear of what "the Omnipotent God doth threaten, and "a love to what he promiſes, to ſuch an "one the world whether ſmiling or frowning will ſeem contemptible. The heaven, and earth, and men, are all but his inſtruments, and cannot do any thing otherwiſe than as they are permitted or acted by him. Though they ſhould ſeem to be angry with us, yet he can reſtrain their wrath, and when he pleaſeth can reconcile them to us. But if he himſelf be offended, none of theſe things will be able to afford us any comfort or relief. 'Tis above all other things the moſt fearful *to fall into the hands of the living God.* That's a notable ſpeech to this purpoſe, which I find cited out of *Plutarch*; "They "that look upon God as the chief rewarder "of Good and Evil, and fear him accordingly, are thereby freed from other "perplexing fears. Such perſons, *minùs animo conturbantur, quam qui indulgent vitiis*

tiis audentque scelera, "have more inward "peace than others who indulge them- "selves in their vices, and dare commit "any wickedness.

And as on the one side, the more men have of this fear towards God, the less they have of other fears: So the less they have of this, the more subject are they to other fears. Amongst the many judgments denounced against the want of this fear of God, the Scripture particularly mentions a fearful mind, *If thou wilt not fear that glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God, the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful,* &c. And this is reckoned as one of them, *The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart.* And if we consult experience, there are none more obnoxious in this kind, than prophane Atheistical persons, who by their vile doctrines and practices, endeavour to harden themselves and others against this fear of God. None so cowardly and timorous as these, none so easily frightened with the least appearance of danger. The *Satyrist* of old observed it of them:

Deut. 28. 58.

ver. 65.

Hi sunt qui trepidant, & ad omnia fulgura pallent.

None

None are ſo fearful, as thoſe that pretend not to fear God at all. And 'tis but juſtice, that thoſe who will not reverence him as *ſons*, ſhould be overwhelmed with dread and aſtoniſhment towards him as *ſlaves*. And this conſideration ought to be no ſmall inducement to men, to labour after this diſpoſition. As
Judg. 9. 2. *Abimelech* ſaid to the men of *Sichem*, *Judg I pray you, whether it be better for you, that threeſcore and ten perſons reign over you, or that one reign over you.* So in this caſe, conſider whether it be better for you, to be diſtracted by the great variety of worldly cares and fears, which as ſo many Tyrants, will domineer over you, and keep you in perpetual ſlavery, or to ſubmit your ſelves to this one fear, the fear of God, which is perfect peace and liberty.

To all which may be added, That it is by this fear that we are to give unto God the glory of his Power and Juſtice. 'Tis this that muſt make us pliable to his will, and effectually remove all ſuch obſtacles as may hinder us from ſubmitting to him; ſubdue our reluctancies, and make us bow down before him. Upon which account this expreſſion of fearing God

God is frequently uſed in Scripture for the whole buſineſs of Worſhip and Religion; becauſe where this fear is well fixed in the heart, all other parts of holineſs and righteouſneſs will naturally follow.

It hath a more peculiar influence to ſtir up in us watchfulneſs and caution, and like a wary friend is apt to ſuggeſt to us the ſafeſt counſel and advice. 'Tis the vigilant keeper of all virtues, that which muſt fortifie us in our temptations, and reſtore us in our lapſes.

He that will but ſeriouſly ponder upon what the meer light of nature dictates, concerning the Omnipotence of him who is the great Creator and Governour of the world, his infinite holineſs and juſtice, and that wiſe Providence which extends to every particular perſon and action, whereby he takes notice of them, and will be ſure to reward or puniſh them, according as they are good or evil: Such an one, muſt needs have his heart affected with a great awe and dread towards the Divine nature.

The very *Heathens* were wont upon this account, to paint their *Jupiter* with a thunderbolt in his hand; to ſtrike an awe into men, from daring to offend him who ſtands always ready armed with vengeance againſt ſuch as provoke him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Of Obedience: *And firſt of* Active Obedience *to the Laws of God.*

HAving diſpatched the duties we are more eſpecially obliged to, with regard to Gods *wiſdom*, *goodneſs*, *power*; I ſhall now treat concerning ſuch other duties, as refer more particularly to his *Dominion* and ſuperiority over us, his right to command and govern us, which are comprehended under the general name of *Obedience*.

The Habit of which may be deſcribed to conſiſt, in ſuch a ſubmiſſive frame of ſpirit, whereby a man doth always devote and reſign up himſelf unto the diſpoſal of his maker, being ready in every condition, to do or ſuffer that which he apprehends to be moſt reaſonable and acceptable, and whereby he may beſt expreſs his love and ſubjection.

By which deſcription it may appear, that this *Obedience* is of two kinds { *Active.* / *Paſſive.*

1. *Active*. Which consists in a readiness of mind to do what God shall injoin.

2. *Passive*. In an acquiescence of mind under what he shall inflict. Both which do necessarily flow from the apprehension of Gods *dominion* over us, his right to govern and dispose of us as he pleaseth. *Obedience*, in the true notion of it, being nothing else but that homage which we owe to such as are in a superior relation, who have a right to command us. Every relation of superiority and dominion being a distinct engagement to subjection; whether *Oeconomical*, as that betwixt *Parent* and *Child*; *Political*, as betwixt *Magistrate* and *Subject*; *Moral*, as betwixt *Benefactor* and *Beneficiary*; or lastly, that which is *Natural*, which above all other things gives the highest title to dominion, as that betwixt the *Maker* and his *Work*, the first Cause and that which he bestows being upon. And God by all these Titles, and many more, may justly challenge dominion over us.

Under this first kind of Obedience, styled *Active*, are comprehended these three particulars: 1. A knowledg of, and an acquaintance with those Laws which we are to observe. 2. A consent to them, or an approbation of them. 3. A conformity to them.

1. An

1. An acquaintance with the Laws of God; whether diſcovered to us by *Revelation* (the principles of nature obliging us, to obſerve and ſubmit to all things which we have reaſon to believe do proceed from God); or by natural light, abſtracting from Scripture and revelation, as the ſubſtance of that which we call the Moral law is. Now though ſuch perſons only, are under the obligation of thoſe Laws which depend upon revelation, to whom a revelation is made and ſufficiently propoſed; becauſe Promulgation is eſſential to a Law: Yet the Moral Law being diſcoverable by natural light, to every man, who will but excite the principles of his own reaſon, and apply them to their due conſequences; therefore there muſt be an obligation upon all men, who have but the uſe of their reaſon, to know theſe Moral Laws; and the ignorance of them muſt be an inexcuſable ſin. *Ignorantia juris* can be no plea in this caſe, becauſe the Law is written in every mans heart by nature, and the ignorance of mankind, as to any part of it, hath been wilfully contracted.

The duties concerning natural worſhip, our adoration of the Deity by affiance, love, reverence, praying to him, expect-

ing mercies from him, returning to him our thanks and acknowledgments, being reverent and ſolemn in all our addreſſes towards him, our thoughts and ſpeeches of him, and of the things that refer to his ſervice, may be evidently inferred from thoſe natural notions, which we have concerning the excellencies of his Nature, and our own dependance upon him.

The duties which concern the promoting of our own and our neighbours well-fare, that mutual juſtice, charity, helpfulneſs, which we are to exerciſe towards one another; theſe may each of them be deduced from that common principle of ſelf-love, whereby every one doth naturally ſeek his own well-fare and preſervation. We are all of us deſirous that others ſhould be juſt to us, ready to help us, and do good to us; and becauſe 'tis a principle of the higheſt equity and reaſon, that we ſhould be willing to do to others, as we deſire and think them obliged to deal with us, this muſt therefore oblige us to the ſame acts of charity and helpfulneſs towards them. Now the drawing out of theſe general rules, and fitting them to particular caſes; a ſtudious and inquiſitive endeavour, to find

find out what our Maſters will is, in ſeveral relations and circumſtances, this I call the duty of *knowing the Commandments.* And 'tis neceſſary, that they ſhould be thus diſtinctly *known*, before a man can *keep* them.

2. A conſent to them, or approbation of them, as being *holy*, *juſt*, and *good*. Which will neceſſarily *follow* from a true notion of the ground and reaſon of them, and muſt neceſſarily *precede* a genuine obedience and conformity to them. He that looks upon them as fetters and bonds, doth rather indure them out of neceſſity, than obey them out of choice and love. *I conſent to the Law, that it is good*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, that is, I do in my judgment own the fitneſs and reaſonableneſs of the things therein injoined, as being the moſt proper means to advance the perfection of our natures. *The law of the Lord is perfect* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*); not only *formaliter*, in it ſelf, but alſo *effectivè* as to us, it makes us to be ſo. And in another place, *Thy law is the truth*, namely, ſuch as it ought to be. There is a congruity betwixt our well-beings, and the nature of the things enjoined. And it is this conviction alone, that muſt beget in us, a love of it, and a delight to practiſe it.

Rom. 7. 12

Rom. 7. 16

Pſal. 19. 7

119. 142.

it. He that harbours any prejudice in his mind againſt the ways of God, as if they were unprofitable, or unequal, can never ſubmit to them willingly, but out of a conſtraint; he may look upon them as his task and burden, but not as his joy and delight. Our external ſubmiſſion to the Law, can never be kindly and regular, till our minds be caſt into the ſame mould with it, and framed unto a ſuitableneſs and conformity to it. And ſuch a temper doth, in the judgment of *Seneca*, render the mind truly great and noble, *Hic eſt magnus animus qui ſe Deo tradidit.* And in another place, *In regno nati ſumus, Deo parere libertas eſt.* "Such a man "hath a truly great and generous mind, "who can reſign up himſelf to Gods "diſpoſal. The greateſt liberty is to ſub- "mit to the Laws of our Soveraign. *His ſervice is perfect freedom.*

De Vita Beata, 15.

3. An obſervance of them, and conformity to them in our lives. This is the end both of the Commandments themſelves, and likewiſe of our knowleldg and approbation of them, namely, the practice of holineſs and virtue in the conduct of our lives; whereby we are to be advanced unto that ſtate of happineſs, wherein the perfection of our natures, and our re-

reſemblance of the Deity doth conſiſt.

And becauſe the beſt of men do frequently fall ſhort of that obedience, which is due to the Laws of God; therefore in caſe of tranſgreſſion, natural light doth direct men to repentance, which is an hearty ſorrow for our neglects and violations of the Divine Law, accompanied with a firm and effectual purpoſe and reſolution of amendment for the future. Which though it do ſuppoſe the Commandments of God not to have been duly obſerved, yet is it the only remedy left in ſuch caſes.

Some have queſtioned, whether there be any obligation upon us for this, by the light of nature; partly, becauſe the *Stoicks* deny it; and partly, becauſe reaſon will tell a man that it cannot afford any compenſation to Divine juſtice. To which I ſhould ſay, That the *Stoicks* indeed do deny this, becauſe it implies paſſion, which their *wiſe man* muſt be without; yet they will admit a man to be diſpleaſed with himſelf for any error or miſtake, which is much the ſame thing with ſorrow, though under another name. And though this be not enough to ſatisfie infinite juſtice, yet it is that which reaſon doth oblige us to. We expect from thoſe who offend us, that they ſhould profeſs their ſorrow and ſhame, beg

beg pardon, and promiſe amendment. And the men of *Nineveh* did upon a Natural principle betake themſelves to this remedy, and with good ſucceſs, though they were doubtful of it, *Who can tell if God will turn and repent?* Jon. 3. 9.

This conformity to the Law of God requires a twofold condition,

{ *Univerſality.*
{ *Regularity.*

1. *Univerſality*; both as to the time, and the duties themſelves; without any ſuch picking and chuſing amongſt them, as may bend the Laws to make them ſuitable to our own intereſts and humours.

2. *Regularity*; in the due proportioning of our love, and zeal, and obſervance, according to that difference which there is in the true nature and conſequence of the things themſelves; preferring *mercy* and *obedience*, before *ſacrifice*; and the *weighty matters of the Law*, before *tything of mint and cummin*; *righteouſneſs* and *peace*, before *meat* and *drink*. 'Tis true, the leaſt commandment is not to be neglected, as having ſtamped upon it the autority of the great God: But then we are to conſider, that the ſame autority by which that is injoined, doth oblige us to prefer other things before it. So that a man

man doth diſobey in doing a good thing, when upon that account he neglects what is far better. And the miſtake of men about this, is the true cauſe of that which we call Superſtition, which is one of the oppoſites to Religion, and ſo deſtructive to the true nature of it. Men being apt to think themſelves priviledged for their neglects and failings in ſome greater matters, by their zeal about leſſer things.

Now nothing will contribute more to baniſh this Superſtition out of the world, than a ſober enquiry into the nature and cauſes of things, whereby we may be able to take a juſt eſtimate of their evidence and importance, and conſequently to proportion our zeal about them.

I mention this the rather, becauſe it hath been by ſome objected, that humane Learning and Philoſophy doth much indiſpoſe men for this humble ſubmiſſion to Divine Laws, by framing their minds to other notions and inclinations than what are agreeable to Religion.

But that this is a falſe and groundleſs prejudice, may be made very evident; The true knowledg of the nature of things, being amongſt natural helps, one of the moſt effectual to keep men off from thoſe two extremes of Religion, *Superſtition* and *Prophaneneſs*.

1. For

1. For *Superſtition*; this doth properly conſiſt in a miſapprehenſion of things, placing Religion in ſuch things as they ought not for the *matter*, or in ſuch a degree as they ought not for the *meaſure*; which proceeds from ignorance.

2. For *Prophaneneſs*; this doth conſiſt in a neglect or irreverence towards ſacred things and duties, when ſuch matters as ought to have our higheſt eſteem, are rendered vile and common. And this likewiſe doth proceed from ignorance of the true nature of things. Now one of the beſt remedies againſt this, is the ſtudy of Philoſophy, and a skill in nature, which will be apt to beget in men, a veneration for the God of nature. And therefore to thoſe Nations who have been deſtitute of Revelation, the ſame perſons have been both their *Philoſophers* and their *Prieſts*; thoſe who had moſt skill in one kind of knowledg, being thought moſt fit to inſtruct and direct men in the other. And if we conſult the ſtories of other places and times, we ſhall conſtantly find thoſe Nations moſt ſolemn and devout in their worſhip, who have been moſt civilized and moſt philoſophical. And on the contrary, thoſe other Nations in *America* and *Africa*, whom *Navigators* report to be moſt

moſt deſtitute of Religion, are withall moſt brutiſh and barbarous as to other Arts and knowledg.

It cannot be denyed indeed, but that a ſlight ſuperficial knowledg of things, will render a man obnoxious either to Superſtition, or to Atheiſtical thoughts; eſpecially if joined with a proud mind and vicious inclinations. He that hath made ſome little progreſs in natural enquiries, and gotten ſome ſmattering in the phraſes of any *Theory*, whereby (as he conceives) he can ſolve ſome of the common *Phænomena*, may be apt to think, that all the reſt will prove as eaſie as his firſt beginning ſeems to be; and that he ſhall be able to give an account of all things: But they that penetrate more deeply into the nature of things, and do not look upon ſecond cauſes, as being ſingle and ſcattered, but upon the whole chain of them as linked together, will in the plaineſt things, ſuch as are counted moſt obvious, acknowledg their own ignorance, and a Divine power; and ſo become more modeſt and humble in their thoughts and carriage. Such inquiſitive perſons will eaſily diſcern (as a noble *Author* hath well expreſſed it) that the higheſt link of Natures Chain is faſtened to *Jupiter*'s Chair.

This

This (notwithſtanding it be a digreſſion) I thought fit to ſay, by way of vindication and anſwer to thoſe prejudices, which ſome men have raiſed againſt humane Learning and the ſtudy of Philoſophy, as if this were apt to diſpoſe men unto Atheiſtical principles and practices. Whereas a ſober enquiry into the nature of things, a diligent peruſal of this volume of the world, doth of it ſelf naturally tend to make men regular in their minds and converſations, and to keep them off from thoſe two oppoſites of Religion, *Superſtition* and *Prophaneneſs*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Paſſive Obedience, *or Patience and Submiſſion to the Will of God.*

THus much may ſuffice concerning the nature and duty of *Active* Obedience.

I proceed to that of *Paſſive* Obedience, or patient ſubmiſſion under the afflicting hand of God.

And though this may ſeem one of the moſt difficult of all other duties, and moſt repugnant to humane nature; yet is there no ſubject more excellently diſcuſſed by the *Heathen Moraliſts*, and wherein they ſeem more to exceed themſelves, than this.

I ſhall mention out of them ſome of thoſe paſſages, which ſeem to me moſt appoſite and material to this purpoſe, under theſe four *heads*, which contain the ſeveral Arguments to this duty; *viz.*

1. Such

1. Such as refer to God, by whose Providence all our sufferings are procur'd, or permitted.
2. Such as concern our selves.
3. Such as may be derived from the nature of affliction.
4. And lastly, such as refer to this grace of Patience.

1. There are many Arguments to convince us of the reasonableness of this duty, from the Nature and Attributes of God, who either sends affliction, or permits them to fall upon us. I shall rank them under these three heads: 1. His *infinite knowledg* and *wisdom*. 2. His *goodness* and *patience* towards us. 3. His *power* and *dominion* over us.

1. From the consideration of his *infinite knowledg* and *wisdom*, whereby he takes notice of, and doth concern himself about every particular event in the world, making *all things beautiful*, *and in their time*, disposing of all to the best. Which is an argument, that divers of the *Heathen* Philosophers do very largely in-
Lib. 6. 39. sist upon. Particularly, *Antoninus*, who hath this passage: "If God (saith he) "do not take particular notice of, and "care

" care for me and my affairs, why do I
" at any time pray to him; and if he doth
" exerciſe a ſpecial providence towards
" all events, no doubt but he doth con-
" ſult well and wiſely about them, nor
" would he ſuffer any hurt or prejudice
" to befall me, unleſs it were for a great-
" er good upon ſome other account, And
" in this I ought to acquieſce. And in
another place ſaith the ſame *Author*. " I Lib. 8. 23.
" refer every thing that befalls me to God,
" as the contriver of it, by whom all e-
" vents are diſpoſed in a wiſe order.

There are alſo many great and excel-
lent ſayings in *Epictetus* to this purpoſe. Lib. 4. c.
" That muſt needs be much more deſire- 7.
" able, which is choſen by the wiſdom
" of God, than that which I chuſe. A
reluctancy againſt the Divine will, is the
ground of all Irreligion and Atheiſm in
the world. " Why may not a man refuſe Lib. 1. c.
" to obey God in what he commands, as 22.
" well as to ſubmit to him in what he in-
" flicts? And then what ground can there
" be for any pretence to Religion? We
" ſhould all (*ſaith he*) conform our minds
" to the will of providence, and moſt
" willingly follow whither ever he ſhall
" lead us, as knowing it to proceed from
" the beſt and wiſeſt contrivance. I do *Enchyrid.*

"in my judgment more consent to that "which God would have, than to that "which my own inclinations lead unto.
Dissert. 3. 7. 2. 26. "I would desire, and will just so, and "no otherwise than as he doth. And in another place, "Use me as thou pleasest, "I do fully consent, and submit to it, and "shall refuse nothing which shall seem "good unto thee. Lead me whither ever "thou wilt, put me into what condition "thou pleasest, must I be in a private, "not in a publick station, in poverty not "in wealth, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἁπάντων τούτων περὶ τὰς αἱρέσεις ἀπολογήσομαι, 'I will not only con-"sent to it, but make it my business to "apologize for it, to justify and main-"tain before all men, such thy dealing "with me to be most fitting and prudent, "most suitable and advantageous to my "condition.

And besides the reasons to this purpose from natural light, which are so excellently improved and urged by some of the *Philosophers*, there are likewise several attestations of this nature in Scripture, wherein God is said to *afflict out of faithfulness*. To be *Wise in counsel*, and *excellent in working*, signifying all the works of his providence to be most excellent, because

Psal. 115. 75.

they

they proceed from the wiſeſt counſel.

And though ſome particular diſpenſations may ſeem unto us to be difficult and obſcure, *His judgments being unſearchable, and his ways paſt finding out*; yet we may be moſt ſure that there is an excellent contrivance in all of them. *Though clouds and darkneſs may be round about him, yet righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of his throne.*

And beſides the more general aſſertions which the Scripture doth frequently mention to this purpoſe, It doth likewiſe more particularly inſiſt upon thoſe ſpecial reaſons and ends, whereby the wiſdom of ſuch diſpenſations are to be juſtified; as namely, *To make us partakers of Gods holineſs*; *to work in us the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs*; to ſave us from *being condemned with the world*; to preſerve in us a holy awe and reverence, *They have no changes, therefore they fear not God, Pſal.* 55. 19. To quicken our reliſh of thoſe mercies which we enjoy, and our thankfulneſs for them: To wean our affections from the things of this world; to prevent the ſurfeits of proſperity, to enlarge our experience, to contract ſuch a kind of hardineſs, and courage as may become a militant ſtate; to

Heb. 12. 11.

1 Cor. 11. 32.

"in my judgment more consent to that
"which God would have, than to that
"which my own inclinations lead unto.
Dissert. 3. "I would desire, and will just so, and
7. "no otherwise than as he doth. And in
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keep up in our minds a continual ſenſe of our dependent condition; which are ſome of the principal things, wherein our happineſs doth conſiſt.

To which may be added, that the *Scripture* doth likewiſe contain ſeveral expreſs promiſes, to aſſure us of the benefit and advantage to be had by the croſſes that befall us. That *all things* in the iſſue *ſhall work together for our good*, *Rom.* 8. 28. So that there is not a trouble or affliction that we meet with, which we could be without, but it hath its neceſſary place and work, in that frame and deſign of events, which the providence of God hath ordained, for the bringing of us to happineſs. And though all of them may *for the preſent ſeem grievous*, and ſome of them perhaps not ſuitable to the Divine goodneſs and promiſes; yet of this we may be moſt aſ-
Pſal. 25. 10. ſured, that all the *ways of the Lord*, *are mercy and truth, to ſuch as keep his covenant and his teſtimonies.* And there are few perſons who have been obſervant of Gods dealings towards them, but are able to ſay from their own experience, that *it is good for them, that they have been afflicted.*

2. A

2. A ſecond Argument to this purpoſe, is from the conſideration of Gods *goodneſs* and *patience* towards us. I have ſhewed before from ſeveral acknowledgments of the *Heathen*, what apprehenſions they had of the Divine goodneſs and forbearance towards ſinners, from whence 'tis eaſie to infer the equity and reaſonableneſs of our patient ſubmiſſion under his afflicting hand. He is *merciful and gracious, longſuffering, abundant in goodneſs and truth.* The *Apoſtle* ſpeaks of *the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance and longſuffering.* He doth indulge us in our failings, and infirmities, with ſuch a kind of tenderneſs, as nurſes uſe to their young children. Now there is all imaginable equity in this conſequence, that if he bear with us in what we cannot lawfully do, that we ſhould bear with him, in *doing what he will with his own.* If he be patient towards us in our ſinning againſt him, when we oppoſe and provoke him, 'tis but reaſon that we ſhould be patient in our ſufferings from him, when he endeavours to heal and reclaim us.

Exod. 34. 6.

Rom. 2. 4.

It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed, and becauſe his compaſſions fail not. 'Tis a great argument of favour

Lam. 3. 22.

and tenderneſs, that God is pleaſed to ſpare us in the midſt of our provocations. 'Twere but juſtice if he ſhould ſuddenly ſnatch us out of this life, and caſt us into Hell: If he doth abate any thing of this, *He doth then puniſh us leſs than our iniquities deſerve*, and we have more reaſon to praiſe him, than to complain againſt him: *For he hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

He that conſiders the mercies he injoys, as well as the evils he ſuffers, and will impartially compare them both together, may find that though his *afflictions do abound*, yet *his conſolations do much more abound*; and that upon the whole matter, when his condition is at the worſt, 'tis much better than what he himſelf deſerves, or what many others enjoy.

2 Cor. 1. 5.

They that are ſenſible of every thing they enjoy as being the free gift of God, will not murmur againſt him, when he is pleaſed to reſume any thing from them. There muſt needs be much unreaſonableneſs and want of equity in that diſpoſition, which cannot bear with ſome ſufferings from that hand, from which we receive all our enjoyments. *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we*

Job 2. 10.

we not receive evil? The evils we ſuffer are much ſhort of our deſert, the good we enjoy is much beyond our deſerts. And therefore upon either account, it muſt be highly unreaſonable for a man to be guilty of impatience and murmuring. *Iniquus eſt qui muneris ſui arbitrium danti non relinquit*, ſaith *Seneca*; "That man "muſt needs be unjuſt and unequal, who "doth not think fit to leave the Giver "unto the liberty of his own gift, to re-"ſume it again when he pleaſeth. And ſuch an one may juſtly be reputed greedy, who is more ſenſible of loſs in the reſtoring of a thing, than of gain in the enjoyment of it. He is an ingrateful wretch, who complains of that as an injury, which is but reſtitution of what was freely lent. And he is a fool, who knows not how to receive benefit by good things, any otherwiſe than by the preſent fruition of them. *Ad Polyb. cap. 29.*

So *Epictetus*, ſpeaking concerning the unreaſonableneſs of murmuring at any croſs events, he hath this paſſage. Τί μοι θεομαχεῖν. "What reaſon have I to fight a-"gainſt God? Why ſhould I deſire things "not deſireable? He that gave hath pow-"er to take, and why ſhould I reſiſt? "This would not only be great folly, to *Diſſertat. lib. 3. cap. 26.*

"oppoſe one that is much ſtronger, but "great injuſtice likewiſe, to fight againſt "a benefactor. You have received all "that you have, and your own very be- "ing from him, and why ſhould you take "it ſo heinouſly, if he is pleaſed to re- "ſume ſomething back again?

3. The conſideration of the Divine *power* and *dominion over us*, muſt needs engage us to a quiet ſubmiſſion under his hand. There are many excellent diſ- courſes to this purpoſe amongſt the *Hea- then* Philoſophers, as particularly in *Sene- ca*. "There is nothing (ſaith he) more "deſireable than for a man to arrive un- "to this temper of mind, to be able in "all troubles and afflictions, to quiet himſelf with this thought, *Diis aliter vi- ſum eſt*; "God thinks not fit to have "it ſo, and therefore I ought to be con- "tent; which is the ſame ſenſe with that in the *Scripture*, *It is the Lord Jehovah, let him do what ſeemeth good unto him. I was dumb and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.*

1 Sam. 3. 18. Pſal. 39.

Epiſt. 96. "In all thoſe conditions which ſeem "hard and grievous to me (ſaith the "ſame *Author*) I do thus diſpoſe my ſelf. I conſider they come from God, *Et non pareo Deo ſed aſſentior, ex animo illum, non*

non quia neceſſe eſt, ſequor: "And I do "endeavour not meerly to *ſubmit*, but "to *aſſent* to him in his dealings, not to "follow him only out of *neceſſity*, but out of *choice*. And in another place, giving counſel to ſuch as were in an afflicted eſtate, he thus adviſeth, *Quæcunq; fiunt, debuiſſe fieri putet, nec velit objurgare naturam: Optimum eſt pati quod emendare non poſſis, & Deum (quo autore cuncta proveniunt) ſine murmuratione comitari*: "Let ſuch a man think that nothing comes "to paſs, but what ought to be; and let "him not take upon him to reprehend "providence: 'Tis beſt for a man to bear "what he cannot mend, and to follow "God (by whom all events are diſpo-"ſed) without murmuring. Let us (*ſaith "he*) beſpeak God as *Cleanthes* did, Epiſt. 107.

Duc me parens, celſiq; dominator poli,
Quocunq; placuit, nulla parendi mora eſt.
Aſſum impiger; Fac nolle, comitabor gemens,
Maluſq; patiar, quod pati licuit bono.

"Let the great Governour of the world, "lead me into what condition he plea-"ſeth, I am moſt ready to follow him; "or ſuppoſe I ſhould find a reluctancy "againſt

"againſt his dealings with me, yet I will "ſtill follow him, though it be ſighing, "and ſuffer that as an evil and wretch-"ed man, which I ought to bear as a "good man, with patience and ſubmiſſi-"on. And a little after, *Sic vivamus, ſic loquamur——Hic eſt magnus animus qui ſe Deo tradidit, & contra, ille puſillus ac degener, qui oblu&atur, & de ordine mundi male exiſtimat, & emendare mavult Deos quam ſe.* "It becomes "men both to ſpeak and live up to this "principle. He only is a truely gene-"rous man, who doth thus reſign up him-"ſelf to God, and on the contrary he is "a little wretch of a degenerate mind, "who ſtruggles againſt him, having a "hard opinion of the government of the "world, and thinks it fitter to mend God "than himſelf. Where is there any thing amongſt thoſe who profeſs Chriſtianity, better and more becomingly ſaid to this purpoſe? Or how can the wit of man frame any ſenſe or words, that do more fully expreſs this ſelf-reſignation, and ſubmiſſion to the providence of God, than is done in theſe excellent ſpeeches of a *Heathen Philoſopher*?

Epi&etus likewiſe, ſpeaking concerning the reaſonableneſs and fitneſs of mens reſigning themſelves up to Gods diſpo-

ſpoſal, hath this paſſage. *Quis verò es tu? aut unde veniſti? aut quare?* "Do "you conſider what you are, and whence "you came, and upon what buſineſs? Did "not he give you a being in the world? "endow you with ſuch a nature? put you "into ſuch a condition, wherein you ſhould "be ſubject to his government and diſpo- "ſal? Did not he appoint the time, and "place, and part you are to act upon the "Theater of this world? And this is "properly your buſineſs, to apply your "ſelf to the fitteſt means of repreſenting "the part allotted to you, not to take "upon you to murmur or repine againſt it. *Hoc tuum eſt datum perſonam bene effingere, eam autem eligere alterius:* "It "doth not belong to us to chuſe our "parts, but to act them. Would it not "better become us to go off the Stage "with adorations and praiſes of him, for "ſo much as he hath permitted us to "hear and ſee, rather than mutinying a- "gainſt him, becauſe we had no more? *Enchyrid. cap. 23.*

And in another place, he ſuggeſts this conſideration, "That our condition, "whilſt we are in this world, is *mili-* "*tant*, wherein every one is without re- "luctancy to ſubmit to the orders of his "great Captain or General, in whatever "he *Diſſert. lib. 3. cap. 24.*

"he ſhall appoint; whether or no it be "to digg in the trenches, or ſtand upon "the watch, or to fight. Every man cannot "be a commander, and a common ſouldier "is to obey, not to diſpute or offer coun- "ſel. If thou mayeſt refuſe the condi- "on or work aſſigned thee, why may "not another do ſo, and according to "this, what order could there be in the "world?

Lib. 10. *cap.* 25. To the ſame purpoſe *Antoninus*. "That "man (*ſaith he*) is to be eſteemed a fu- "gitive and an apoſtate, who runs away "from his Maſter. Now the great Law- "giver who governs the world, is our "common Maſter and Ruler, and his Will "is the only Law we are to ſubmit unto. "And therefore for a man to be angry "or grieved, becauſe things fall not out "according to his will, what is this but re- "volting from him, and declaring enmi- "ty againſt him?

Beſides theſe teſtimonies from ſome of the wiſer *Heathen*, the *Scripture* likewiſe doth abound in ſeveral atteſtations to this purpoſe, as particularly that in *Job* 34. 31, *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more; that which I ſee not teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do ſo no*

no more. And *chap.* 33. 12, 13, *God is greater than man, why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him? He gives not account of any of his matters.* As if he had ſaid, *that* man doth ſtrangely forget his condition, who by his murmuring and repining doth think to call God to an account; why, he is the ſupreme Lord of all, and may do whatever he pleaſeth. *Should not the potter have power over the clay?* There is no man but muſt think it juſt that the potter ſhould diſpoſe of his clay as he pleaſeth, giving it ſuch a ſhape, and deſigning it to ſuch a uſe as he ſhall think meet. And can any one judge it reaſonable, that God ſhould have leſs power over us, than we have over the works of our hands? *Behold O Lord thou art our father, we are the clay and thou art the potter,* Iſa. 64. 8. *Wo to him that ſtriveth with his maker, ſhall the potſheard ſtrive with the potſheards of the earth? ſhall the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, what makeſt thou? or thy work, he hath no hands?* Iſa. 45. 9. This ſin of impatience and murmuring is here ſtyled *ſtriving againſt God*; conteſting with his wiſdom and his power, ſaying to him, *what makeſt thou*, which reflects upon his *wiſdom*; and *he hath no hands*, which re-

flects upon his *power*, as if he were not able *extremam apponere manum*, to finish what he had begun; both which are not only high affronts to the Divine nature, but exceeding foolish and mischievous in the consequence of them. The mutual contention of men amongst themselves, *testa cum testis*, one pot-sherd with another, may prove fatal to them: If two earthen vessels dash together, they can get nothing by it, they may both be broken; but for the clay to strive with the Potter, that is so foolish and so unequal a contention, as nothing can be more, and must needs expose it to the worst of dangers. Murmurers are in the *Scripture*-phrase styled *children of rebellion*, *Numb.* 17. 10. Because they that speak against God, would actually resist him likewise, if they could.

If we receive all that we are or have, our beings and our well-beings from God, nothing can be more evident, than that he may justly resume any thing again, or inflict upon us any evil, that is either short of, or but equal unto, the good he hath bestowed upon us.

Thus much shall serve for the first kind of Arguments, referring to the Divine nature and attributes.

2. I

2. I proceed to the ſecond ſort of Arguments to this purpoſe, from the *conſideration of our ſelves*; which I ſhall treat of in theſe three particulars. 1. We are men. 2. We are ſinners. 3. We are living men. Upon each of which grounds it will appear a very unreaſonable thing, that we ſhould murmur and complain againſt God. The *Prophet* hath put theſe three conſiderations together. *Why doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin?* Lam. 3. 39.

1. We are *men*, which is a mercy far above any temporal affliction that we can ſuffer. God might have made worms inſtead of men, ſuch deſpicable creatures as are below common notice. Whereas in being men, we are become Lords of Heaven and Earth, having an excellency above all other creatures that ever God made, excepting the Angels. And is it not a ſhame for ſuch an one, to be a ſlave to every ſlight trouble? that any *light affliction, which is but for a moment*, ſhould make our ſouls which are *immortal* to bow down under it? Should not the nobility of our natures advance us to a more generous temper, and make us erect and chearful under ſuch troubles? ſee how *David* was affected with this thought.

Pſal. 8. 4. thought. *Lord! what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* 'Tis a mercy and a condeſcenſion to be admired, that God doth ſo much as take notice of us, though with his chaſtiſements, and therefore ought not to be the ground of our complaint. He might ſuffer us to go on ſecurely in our ſins, without any reſtraint. We do not think our ſelves concerned to take notice of every little fly or inſect, or the poor worms under our feet. And therefore when he ſhall take ſuch ſpecial care of us, as to reſtrain us in our wandrings, to adminiſter Phyſick to us in our diſeaſes, we ought upon this account, rather humbly to thank and admire him, than to murmur againſt him.

Again, we are *but men*; creatures of a dependant being, not Lords of our own happineſs. *And who art thou O man that replieſt againſt God?* how vile and deſpicable in compariſon to him, and how unfit to judge of his ways? It is the common condition of Humanity to be expoJob 5. 7. ſed to ſufferings. *For man is born to troubles as the ſparks fly upwards*, that is, by a natural unavoidable neceſſity. And 1 Cor. 10. 13. there is no *temptation* or trouble *that befalls*

falls us, but what is common to men. We are born into, and must live in a troublesom tumultuous world, where

Luctus, & ultrices posuere cubilia curæ;
Pallentésq; habitant morbi; tristisq; senectus.

"Which is the proper place of grief, "and care, and diseases, and the infirmi- "ties of age; and therefore we cannot expect a total exemption from these things. *Omnia ista in longâ vitâ sunt, quomodo in longâ viâ, & pulvis, & lutum, & pluvia.* Sen. Ep. 96. "These things in a long "life, are like dust, and dirt and rain "in a long journey, which it were a vain thing for a man to think he could wholly avoid, but that he must sometime or other have his share of them. Now men usually vex and repine at that which is extraordinary and unusual, not at that which is general and common to all.

2. We are *sinners*, and so afflictions are our wages, our due; and there is no reasonable man that will repine at just and equal dealing; there is a special *emphasis* to this purpose in the very phrase of that Text forecited: *A Man for the punishment of his sins*, implying, that if he be but

a man, if he have but rational principles, he must needs acknowledg the equity of
Luke 23. 41. being punished for sin. The **Thief** upon the Cross had so much ingenuity, as to confess it reasonable, that both he and his fellow, should submit to just punish-
Rom. 3. 19. ment. Now the Apostle tells us, that *every man* is by a natural conviction *concluded under sin*, for this very reason, *that every mouth may be stopped, and that God*
v. 4. *may be justified in his saying, and clear when he judgeth.* One chief reason which
Ezek. 18. 25. makes men apt to complain, that *Gods ways are unequal*, is because they do not consider that their own are so. It is the pride and folly of our natures, as to ascribe all the good we enjoy to our own endeavours and merit, so to murmur and complain against God for the evil we suffer; than which nothing can be more false and unequal. The *wise man* hath observed it,
Prov. 19. 3. that *the foolishness of man perverteth his ways, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.* We first run our selves into mischief and then complain against God; whereas according to common reason, the *blame* should be where the *fault* is. It would be a much more befitting temper, to demean our selves upon this consi-
Job 34. 31. deration, as *Elihu* advises; *Surely it is meet*

to

to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more, &c. And upon this ground it is, that the *Prophet* having in one verſe, in the forecited place, diſſwaded from murmuring and complaints, he doth in the very next verſe, exhort to ſelf-examination; *Let us ſearch and try our ways*; implying, that he who rightly underſtands his own ſinfulneſs, will find little reaſon to repine at his ſufferings. Lam. 3. 39.

3. We are *living men*, whereas *the wages of ſin is death*; all the plagues that we are capable of, either in this or the other world, being but the due reward of ſin. And we have no reaſon to repine at kind and moderated corrections. He might have ſtruck us dead in the act of ſome ſin, and ſo have put us out of a poſſibility of happineſs. It was *Davids* comfort, that *though the Lord had chaſtened him ſore, yet he had not given him over to death*: And the advantage which he enjoyed in this reſpect, did abundantly ſilence him againſt any complaints in regard of the other. *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not.* The words are very emphatical, *mercies* in the *plural*, for the *number*, intimating a multitude of favours Pſal. 118. 18. Lam. 3. 22.

in this one act of his forbearance. And 'tis *compaſſions* or *bowels* for the *nature* of them, which ſignifies tender affectionate mercy.

3. From the conſideration of afflictions, which in themſelves are neither good nor evil, but *ſecundùm modum recipientis*, according to the diſpoſition of the ſubject. To wicked men they may prove curſes and judgments, teſtimonies of Gods hatred and anger. But to others they may upon theſe two accounts prove benefits; from their

Indication, what they ſignifie.
End, what they effect.

1. From the *indication* of them, what they denote and ſignifie; not Gods hatred of us, but his ſpecial care towards us. They may be teſtimonies or earneſts of Gods favour, *for whom he loves he rebukes and chaſtens, even as a father a ſon in whom he delighteth. Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord.* Ye are the children of God (ſaith *Seneca*) and therefore *ſicut ſeverus pater duriùs educat*, he carries a ſtricter hand over you, as having a ſpecial regard to your welfare, that you may not miſcarry, or, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, that *you may not be condemned with the world.* The *Holy Ghoſt* eſteems afflicti-

Heb. 12.5. Rev. 3.19. Pſa. 94.12. Prov. 3.12.

1 Cor. 11. 32.

afflictions to be a ſpecial priviledg, ſpeaking of St. *Pauls* being a *choſen veſſel, to bear his name before the Gentiles and Kings,* in the next *verſe* it is reckoned up as another priviledg, that *he ſhould ſuffer many things for his name ſake.* And therefore the ſame bleſſed Apoſtle ſpeaks of afflictions as a gift; *To you it is given, not only to believe on him, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake.* *If ye are without afflictions, then are ye baſtards and not ſons.* 'Tis reckoned upon as a curſe to *have our good things in this life.* And that was one of Gods ſevereſt puniſhments, which he threatens to thoſe, *Hoſ.* 4. 14, that he will not puniſh them for their whoredoms and adulteries. Not to be troubled like other men, may be a ſign of neglect and disfavour. 'Tis neceſſary to our conditions in this world: and God doth afflict his own children *out of faithfulneſs.* He hath ſo appointed, that the way to the heavenly *Canaan* ſhall be through the *Wilderneſs.*

Acts 9. 15. Phil. 1. 29. Heb. 12. 8. Luke 16. 25. Pſal. 73. 5. Pſal. 119. 75.

2. From the *end* of them, what they are deſigned for and effect, namely, our profit and improvement; being intended either for our correction or probation, for our amendment or trial, as I have ſhewed before.

4. This virtue of patience and ſubmiſſion is highly reaſonable, upon account of thoſe advantages which do follow ſuch a temper of mind.

1. It keeps our happineſs in our own power, by bringing our minds to our conditions, which is the only remedy things are capable of, when we cannot bring our conditions to our minds. *Hanc rerum conditionem mutare non poſſumus, id poſſumus, magnum ſumere animum, & viro bono dignum, quo fortiter fortuita patiamur.* Sen. Ep. 107. "It is not in our power to change our "condition; but this is in our power, to "attain unto ſuch a greatneſs of mind, as "becomes worthy men, whereby we may "be lifted up above the hurt of outward "croſſes. If a man would be ſure never to meet with any impediment in the thing he deſires, never to be forced to any thing againſt his will, his only way is to conform his mind to the will of God, and to *let him do with us what ſeemeth good unto him.* Diſſert. lib. 3. cap. 26. "If he would have me (ſaith "*Epictetus*) to be ſick or poor, I will "be willing to be ſo; whatever employ-"ment he will deſign for me, I will not "decline, and whatever he would not "have me be or do, I will be againſt it "likewiſe.

2. It

2. It will be a means to promote our peace, comfort, quiet, and to alleviate our troubles, and make our yoke more eaſie. *Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.* The ſtrugling with our yoke will but make it gall us ſo much the more; 'twill be a greater eaſe for us, to follow it willingly, and to be led by it, rather than to be dragged along with it. *Nullum tam arctum eſt jugum quod non minus lædat ducentem quàm repugnantem. Unum eſt levamentum malorum ingentium, pati, & neceſſitatibus ſuis obſequi.* "There is no yoke ſo ſtreight and hurt-"ful in it ſelf, but will prove more hurt-"ful for our ſtrugling with it. The only "allay under great ſufferings, is to bear "them quietly, and obey neceſſity, to "ſubmit to what we cannot remedy. It may be in the power of others to diſturb our outward conditions, but it ſhould be in our power, that they ſhould not diſturb our minds. And ſo long as we can preſerve our tranquillity there, we may be ſaid to be truly happy. *Seneca de Ira. lib. 3. c. 16.*

An impatient man is in the *Scripture phraſe*, compared to *a wild Bull in a net, being full of the fury of the Lord*, Iſa. 51. 20. As that fierce creature, being muzled in the Huntſman's toyl, doth by all his ſtrug-

ling but further intangle himſelf; ſo do men increaſe their own perplexities, by their impatience under them. There is no one thing wherein the folly of men doth more appear, than that fooliſh exchange which they make of their inward quiet and peace, for outward trifles; both as to their impatience under the things they ſuffer, and their impetuous deſires after the things they want. *Ex eo ſtupor noſter apparet* (ſaith *Seneca*) *quòd ea ſola putamus emi, pro quibus pecuniam ſolvimus, ea gratuita vocamus, pro quibus nos ipſos impendimus.* "Herein appears "the ſtupidneſs of men, that they eſteem "thoſe things only to be bought, for "which they pay *money*; but count ſuch "things of free coſt, for which they pay "*themſelves*, their inward quiet and tranquillity, which is far more to be valued than their outward poſſeſſions. Whereas if they were but as wiſe in this kind of merchandiſe as in others, they would conſider the juſt rate and value of every thing, and pay no more for it, either in the purchaſe of it, or parting with it, than it is really worth. Ep. 42.

3. 'Tis very much for our honour and reputation to bear afflictions decently. "'Take away from a good man (ſaith *Maximus*

"*mus Tyrius*) the honour of his suffer-
"ings καὶ ἀποστεφανεῖς, καὶ ἀποκερύπτεις, and you
"rob him of his Crown, you hide and
"obscure his glory. *Si hominem vide-* Seneca, Ep. 41.
ris, interritum periculis, inter adversa fe-
licem, in mediis tempestatibus placidum,
ex superiore loco homines videntem, ex
æquo Deos, non subit te veneratio ejus, &c.
"If thou seest a man undaunted in the
"midst of danger, happy in adversity,
"placid and serene in a tempest, placed
"in a station equal with the Gods, whence
"he looks down upon other men, as be-
"ing in a vale below him; Art thou not
"presently possest with a high reverence
"and veneration for such a person? And
"in another place (saith the same *Au-* Ep. 64.
thor), *Quam venerationem præceptoribus*
meis debeo, eandem illis præceptoribus ge-
neris humani. Speaking of such persons,
saith he, "such veneration as I owe to my
"Master and Tutor, such and much more
"ought I to pay to these Teachers of man-
"kind, who set them such excellent lessons
"for their imitation.

God himself upon this account, seems
(as it were) to glory and to triumph o-
ver the Devil, in the behalf of *Job*: *Seest* Job 2.
thou my servant Job, that there is none like
him upon earth? 'Twas an high *elogium*
that,

that, and tended much to his honour.
1 Pet. 4. 13. And the *Apoſtle* tells us elſewhere, that *a meek* and a patient *ſpirit is with God of great price. The ſpirit of glory, and of God reſteth upon* ſuch as endure ſufferings. Men think to ſet out themſelves, and to get repute amongſt others, by their haughtineſs, looking upon every little injury as a high indignity; but of ſuch a frame of mind, it may be truly ſaid, *non eſt magnitudo, tumor eſt*; It is not greatneſs, but a ſwelling of mind. It ſhews a narrowneſs and littleneſs of ſoul. *Invalidum omne naturâ querulum.* "The more weak any "thing is, the more apt to complain. Whereas on the other ſide, patience doth enlarge the minds of men, and raiſe their eſteem, making them triumphant without fighting. The *Heathen* and their *Idolatries* were heretofore ſubdued, *non à repugnantibus ſed à morientibus Chriſtianis*, as St. *Auſtin* ſpeaks, *not by the reſiſtance, but by the patient ſufferings of the dying Chriſtians.* So mightily did this grace conduce in the primitive times, to the ſpreading and propagation of Chriſtianity through the Heathen world.

But are all complaints then in affliction unlawful? To this I anſwer:

1. Na-

1. Natural expreſſions of grief are allowable. A man muſt be ſenſible of his ſufferings, and conſequently cannot but grieve under them. That ſtupor and benummedneſs of ſpirit, whereby men are made unapprehenſive of their afflictions, is in it ſelf both a great ſin and a great judgment.

2. But then theſe expreſſions of our grief muſt be rightly qualified with their due circumſtances:

1. They muſt not be *diſproportionable* to the *occaſion*. A great complaint for a little croſs, like *Jonah*'s trouble for his gourd.

2. Not *unſitting* for the *manner*; not accompanied with bitter invectives againſt ſecond cauſes and inſtruments; they ſhould rather expreſs our humility, than our anger.

3. They muſt not be *immoderate* for the *degree*; as if we were without hope, like *Davids* paſſionate complaints for the death of his ſon *Abſolom*.

4. They muſt not be *ſinful* for the *nature* of them, blaming Gods juſtice, and reviling his providence.

And now that I have ſo abundantly ſhew'd the reaſonableneſs of this vertue of

of *patience* and *ſubmiſſion*, I am ſtill ſenſible how hardly men are brought to it when there is real occaſion for the practiſe of it; and therefore I think it may be of great uſe to add ſome *directions* which may help to prevent, or at leaſt abate our impatience under afflictions, and to promote this ſubmiſſive temper and diſpoſition. And accordingly they ſhall be of two ſorts, ſome *negative*, others *poſitive*.

I begin with the *negative*.

1. Take heed of aggravating afflictions, beyond their due proportions. Do not fix your eye or your thoughts, chiefly upon the ſmart of them, without regarding the benefit of them? 'Tis true indeed (as the *Apoſtle* tells us) *No affliction is joyous for the time, but grievous, nevertheleſs afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs, to them that are exerciſed thereby.* Heb. 12. 11. 'Twere an unreaſonable thing and an argument of great frowardneſs, for a patient to mind only the bitterneſs of his potion, the corroſiveneſs of his plaiſter, without having any regard to the remedy and the health which may be procured by them. For a man always to have his hand upon his ſore, will encreaſe the pain, and hinder the

the cure of it. To inſiſt upon every particular circumſtance whereby men may aggravate their afflictions, is the ready means to add fuel to their impatience, and to drive them to deſpondency. This is a ſure way to bring upon our ſelves much needleſs trouble. 'Tis all one as if a man ſhould chew the pills which ought to be ſwallowed whole, which will make us more ſick, and thereby rather hinder the due operation of them than promote it.

2. Beware of refuſing comfort, or rejecting the means that are afforded us for our relief and ſupport under the troubles that befall us. This were to take part with our diſeaſe againſt our ſelves, to refuſe the phyſick, and to pull off the plaiſter that ſhould heal us; which argues much frowardneſs, beſides the folly and ingratitude of rejecting *the conſolations of God, as if they were but ſmall to us*, as *Eliphaz* ſpeaks. Whatever our loſſes or diſappointments are, he can be ten times better to us, than thoſe things are, by the loſs of which we are provoked to diſcontent and murmuring. Job 15. 11.

3. Do not give liberty to paſſions; which of all other things belonging to the ſoul, are moſt impetuous and unruly, if

if not reſtrained within fitting bounds. The ſenſitive appetite (to which the paſſions belong) is the inferior and brutiſh part of the ſoul, anſwerable to the dregs of the people in a political government, of themſelves apt to be heady, tumultuous, raſh, mutinous, if not reſtrained by ſome ſuperiour power: So is it with the paſſions of the ſoul, which therefore ought to be watched over, with great circumſpection; and the rather, becauſe they have uſually the Empire over us, during our younger years, before reaſon comes to exerciſe its ſoveraignty: And if once we give way to them, 'twill be a buſineſs of no ſmall difficulty, to reduce them into order again.

Thoſe very thoughts which occaſion much diſcontent and trouble to the ſoul, whilſt they lay in the breſt in a huddle and confuſion, if they be but diſtinctly conſidered, and coolely debated, will ſeem much leſs, if not vaniſh into nothing. 'Tis the nature of diſorder, to make things appear more than indeed they are. Which is one reaſon that *Philoſophers* give why the ſtars ſeem innumerable, becauſe they are commonly looked upon, as being wildly ſcattered up and down, out of all regular form. 'Tis ſo likewiſe with mens in-

inward discontents, which are exceedingly multiplyed by the confusion of them; and would appear much less, if but distinctly reduced and examined. Most of those which occasion much perplexity, whilst they are mixed with many others in a crowd, would upon a clear view and severe examination, appear much less considerable: And that's another good means for the preserving of our minds from this impatience; To put a stop to our passions in the beginning of their course, before they be in their full carrear, and then grow too hard for us.

4. Do not chiefly regard the instruments of your troubles, which will be apt to provoke impatience and distemper; but rather upon the supreme disposer of them. Though men may deal very unworthily with us, yet God is just in all his ways. This was that which satisfied old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* Though the *Sabæans* had spoiled *Job* of his oxen and asses, and the *Chaldeans* plundered him of his *Camels*; yet we find no complaints against them, he takes notice only of God as the Author of these sufferings. *The Lord gives and the Lord takes away, and therefore blessed be the name of the Lord.* 1 Sam. 3. 18. Job 1. 15, 17.

'Tis

'Tis worth your notice to obſerve the ſtrange variety of *Davids* carriage, according as he was either mindful or forgetful of this conſideration. How meek and humble upon the rebellion of *Abſolom*: 2 Sam. 15. 26. *If the Lord ſhall ſay, I have no delight in thee; behold here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him.* And ver. 10. ſo in the next chapter, when *Shimei* did ſo bitterly revile him, that which pacified all impatient revengeful thoughts, was this conſideration, *The Lord hath bid Shimei curſe.* Whereas at another time, when he was not ſo careful to fix his thoughts upon this, how ſtrangely is his carriage altered? How furious at the churliſhneſs of *Nabal?* 1 Sam. 25. 22. How paſſionate at the death of *Abſolom?* 2 Sam. 18. 33. Such great power is there in this one meditation, if ſeriouſly fixed upon, to ſubdue the natural rage and diſtemper of our hearts. When he looks upon God, he ſubmits, and is ſilent. Pſal. 39. *I was dumb and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.* But when he conſiders the inſtruments, his heart begins to riſe, and his paſſions to tumultuate and ferment into a ſtorm.

5. Take heed of engaging your deſires upon theſe tranſient periſhable things. Learn to eſtimate every thing, according to

to its juſt rate and value; and this will be a means to work in us weaned affections from the world. They that love too much, muſt grieve too much. If we would *weep* as *not weeping*, we muſt *rejoice* as *not rejoycing*. They that think the greateſt gain to be but ſmall, will think the greateſt loſs to be ſo too. *Neminem adverſa fortuna comminuit, niſi quem ſecunda decepit.* "Thoſe that are "moſt apt to be deceived and puft up "by the flatteries of proſperity, will be "moſt apt to be dejected by the frowns "of adverſity. And therefore one of the ſureſt ways, to make all croſſes eaſie to us, is to have a low eſteem of theſe temporal things; for which we ſhall find reaſon enough, if we conſider the vanity and vexation of them. There being a thouſand ways of fraud and oppreſſion and caſualties, whereby we may be deprived of their poſſeſſion; and as many, whereby they may be rendered uſeleſs to us in their poſſeſſion; as in the caſe of pain and ſickneſs, either of body or mind: And as many whereby they may be rendered hurtful, and expoſe us to the envy of others, to many kind of temptations unto ſin, and particularly to many kind of griefs and vexations upon the ac-

Sen. Helv. cap. 3.

count of our unwillingneſs to part with them. All which are to be provided againſt, by our entertaining ſuch thoughts of them, as may be ſuitable to their value.

6. Take heed of being ſolicitous about the *iſſue* of things, and of determining your ſelves too peremptorily to particular *events*. 'Tis our buſineſs indeed to ſerve providence in the uſe of *means*, but the iſſue of things belongs to God. We have nothing to do with them, and that which is not within our *power*, ſhould be out of our *care*. Every mans great end is happineſs. The various events that befall us in the world, are but ſeveral *ways* to this *end*. And therefore 'tis very reaſonable and congruous, that every one ſhould have a Travellers indifferency towards them. A man upon the road, who is travelling to ſuch a Town, and comes to ſome doubtful turnings, is not concerned either for the right or left hand way, hath not an inclination to one more than the other, any farther than to be directed to that which is the true way, and will bring him to his journies end. Now that way which the providence of God doth lead us into, muſt needs be the beſt and the ſureſt way to this end. Thou

"Thou fooliſh man (ſaith *Epictetus*) "doſt not thou deſire that which may be "moſt convenient for thee? And can "there be any thing better than what God "appoints? Do but then conſider (ſaith "he) what is the meaning of being ea- "gerly ſolicitous about particular events, "διαφθείρεις τὸν κριτὴν, παράγεις τὸν σύμβουλον, "thou doſt thereby as much as in thee "lyes to corrupt thy Judge, and ſeduce "thy counſellour: than which there can- "not be a greater folly. Theſe are the "*negative* Directions. *Lib. 2. c. 7.*

I proceed to thoſe that are *poſitive*; and

1. Labour for true apprehenſions of the Divine nature and excellencies; his infinite power, and wiſdom, and goodneſs. When our hearts are once poſſeſt with right notions, and a due eſteem of theſe perfections, they will not be ſo apt to break out into murmuring againſt him. That which *Benhadad* ſpake proudly to *Ahab*; *Thy ſilver and thy gold, thy wives and thy children are mine*: That may God truly ſay to us; what haſt thou that thou haſt not received? And if we have received it, as we have no reaſon to glory in the poſſeſſion, ſo neither have we to complain at the loſs of it, when he 1 Ring. 20. 3.

that hath lent it us doth reſume it again. It is, or ſhould be our daily prayer, that Gods *will may be done on earth as it is in heaven*. And it were a moſt unreaſonable thing, for men to murmur at the grant of their petitions. 'Twas a notable ſaying, which is commonly reported of *Luther*, when *Philip Melanchthon* was much diſquieted in his own thoughts, at the confuſed ſtate of things in the firſt Reformation; *Monendus eſt Philippus, deſinat eſſe rector mundi*: "*Melanchthon* is to "be admoniſhed that he would ceaſe to "take upon him the government of the "world, as if the iſſue of things did be-"long to his care. God is infinitely wiſe
1 Cor. 10. 13. and faithful, and will proportion our ſufferings to our abilities. He hath promi-
Rom. 8. 28. ſed *that all things ſhall work together for our good*.

2. Conſider the mercies you enjoy, as well as the evils you ſuffer. That was a moſt unworthy temper in *Ahab*, and in *Haman*, to receive no ſatisfaction in all their great poſſeſſions and enjoyments, becauſe they were diſappointed in ſome one ſmall particular. 'Tis the advice of the *wiſe man*, Eccleſ. 7. 14. *In the day of proſperity rejoice, in the day of adverſity conſider*. But what is that which we ſhould con-

conſider? Why, *that God hath ſet the one againſt the other*: And ſo ſhould we too, ſet one againſt another; and then we ſhall find, that we have as much reaſon to be patient under our ſufferings, as to rejoice in our mercies. 'Tis a remarkable paſſage *that*, concerning *Mephiboſheth*; when *Ziba* 2 Sam. 19. had by his falſe accuſation, cauſed the King to confiſcate his goods, and beſtow them upon himſelf; this had been enough one would think, to provoke *Mephiboſheth* unto high complaints, both againſt the injuſtice of *David*, and the baſeneſs and unfaithfulneſs of his Servant *Ziba*: But ſee how he demeans himſelf, *I have* ver. 27, 28. *been ſlandered unto my Lord the King, but do what is good in thine eyes. Thou haſt ſet thy ſervant amongſt them that eat at thine own table, what right therefore have I to cry any more unto the King?* Where he makes the kindneſs that *David* had formerly ſhewn him, to weigh down and ſatisfie for the wrong that he then ſuffered. And if men had but ſuch a grateful temper of ſpirit, they would not be ſo apt to murmur. Thoſe that deſerve leaſt, do uſually complain moſt. The moſt unworthy are the moſt impatient.

Suppoſe all manner of evils and afflictions, which are now promiſcuouſly ſcat-

tered up and down in the world, whether they concern ſoul or body; ſpiritual blindneſs and obduracy, poverty, ſlavery, reproach, ſickneſs, pain, maimedneſs, deformity, *&c.* I ſay, ſuppoſe all theſe were now to be diſtributed amongſt mankind, ſo as every one were to have an equal ſhare of them: Would you be content to ſtand to this new diſtribution? I ſuppoſe there are not many perſons in this Nation, in ſo miſerable and forlorn a condition, that upon ſerious conſideration of the ſpecial advantages they do or may partake of, above many other millions in the world, would conſent to it. And if this be ſo, certainly then it muſt be both an unreaſonable, and a very ungrateful thing for ſuch men to be impatient, who enjoy more than their ſhare comes to.

3. Conſider the deſerts of your ſins, and then it will eaſily appear, that your condition is not at any time ſo bad, but you have deſerved it ſhould be worſe. That you have more reaſon to commend the care and wiſdom of the Phyſician, than to complain of the bitterneſs of the potion. *Tantò quis patientiùs ferrum medici tolerat, quantò magis putridum eſſe conſpicit quod ſecat*; "The more the pa-
Greg. Moral.
"tient doth diſcern the corruption and
"dan-

"danger of his ſore, the more willingly "doth he endure the launce of his Chy-"rurgion. That is a remarkable ſtory in *Geneſis*, Chap. 42. to ſhew that this conſideration of the deſert of our own ſins, is a very powerful means to pacifie us againſt all impatience under ſufferings. The ſtory concerns *Joſeph*'s brethren, who coming into *Ægypt* to buy Corn, were there roughly treated, accuſed for ſpies, clapt into priſon; ſo that one would have thought, they had reaſon enough to fret and murmur at that hard unjuſt dealing. And yet we find their carriage to be very humble and patient; but what that was which made them ſo, you may ſee, *ver.* 21. they remembred their cruelty to their brother *Joſeph*, and that brought them to acknowledg this diſtreſs to be deſervedly come upon them, *becauſe they had not pityed their brother, when he beſought them in the anguiſh of his ſoul.* The like conſideration did ſtop *Job* in his complaint, after all his high conteſtations and arguings with God; he no ſooner thought upon his own vileneſs, but he was preſently ſilenced. *Behold I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee, I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* Chap. 40. 4.

4. Be careful whilst you are in a prosperous estate, to prepare for trouble and afflictions, by a prudent consideration of the mutability of things. This will be a means to alleviate the burden of them. *Sen. Ep. 76.* *Præcogitati mali mollis ictus venit.* And *Ep. 91.* in another place, *inexpectata plus aggravant, novitas adjicit calamitatibus pondus*; "That stroke will have less force "which is foreseen and expected, where-"as the suddenness and surprize of it, "will add to the weight and smart of "it. *In tantâ rerum sursum ac deorsum* *Sen. Trang. Aq. cap. 11.* *cuntium versatione, si non quicquid fieri potest, pro futuro habes, das in te vires rebus adversis, quas infregit quisquis prior vidit*; "In that various change and re-"volution of events which we behold in "the world, if we do not look upon pos-"sible dangers and troubles as future, we "do thereby strengthen our adversaries "and disarm our selves. When we see at any time the losses and imprisonments, or poverty, or funerals of others, we ought presently to reflect this may be our case. *Cuivis potest accidere quod cuiquam potest.* One loses husband, wife, children, estate: We ought from all such spectacles to infer, that though this be not at present, yet it may shortly be our condition; and accordingly

cordingly by expectation to fortifie our ſelves againſt it. *Hic nos error decipit, hic effœminat, dum patimur, quæ nunquam pati nos poſſe prævidimus. Aufert vim præſentibus malis, qui futura proſpexit.* "This "is the error which doth deceive and "effeminate men, whilſt they ſuffer ſuch "things as they did not expect, and are "not prepared for. It breaks the force "of evils when they come, to foreſee they "will come. *Sen. ad Matium, cap. 9.*

5. Often reflect upon your former experience. That will be a means to prevent all deſpondencies, to work in us hope and confidence. There is no man ſo mean and inconſiderable, if he will but take an impartial view of what he hath formerly ſeen and obſerved, concerning Gods dealing with himſelf and others, but may upon this account find reaſon enough to allay all murmuring diſcontented thoughts. We have frequent examples to this purpoſe in Scripture, *Jacob*, *David*, *Jehoſaphat*, the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, in ſeveral places, who all have had recourſe to this remedy, when they would ſtrengthen themſelves againſt diſcontent and deſpondency. And I ſuppoſe, there is ſcarce any ſerious man of ſo little experience, but hath taken notice of, and can remember how ſome

Gen. 32. 10. 1 Sam. 17. 37. 2 Chron. 20. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 10.

croſſes

eroſſes and diſappointments, have in the iſſue proved mercies and benefits to him. And if it have been ſo formerly, why may it not be ſo again.

6. And laſtly, Labour after thoſe particular vertues, which are of near affinity to this of patience; whereby it will be very much ſtrengthened and promoted. There is a certain chain of them mentioned, *Gal.* 5. 22, and ſtyled by the *Apoſtle* the *fruits of the ſpirit*, as belonging more particularly to the ſpirit of Chriſtianity. The firſt is *Love*, ἀγάπη, which beareth all things and endureth all things: The next is *Joy*, χαρὰ, a chearful temper of mind, in oppoſition to moroſeneſs and frowardneſs: Then *Peace*, εἰρήνη, a compoſedneſs and ſedateneſs of ſpirit, free from all inordinate perturbations, and without any kind of itch of quarrelling with others: And next *Long-ſuffering*, μακροθυμία, whereby the mind is not eaſily provoked or tyred, but is eaſily appeaſed: Then *Gentleneſs*, χρηστότης, *generoſity*, benignity, which ſignifies a mind moſt ready to part with any thing, towards the help and relief of others in their neceſſities: Then *Goodneſs*, ἀγαθωσύνη, (*i.e.*) ſuch an equal and ingenuous ſimplicity of manners, whereby men are rendred

dred eaſily tractable and placable, and moſt amiable in the whole courſe of their converſations: Then *Faith*, πίστις, a dependance upon God for our ſupport and deliverance: Then *Meekneſs*, πραότης, whereby we put a reſtraint upon our anger, ſo as not to be provoked for any leſſer cauſe, or in a greater meaſure, or for a longer time, than may be fitting for the occaſion; always preſerving our minds free from any ſudden guſts of paſſion. And laſtly, *Temperance*, ἐγκράτεια, continence, whereby we contain all our paſſions with their juſt bounds, either of *joy* in the *affluence* of things, or of *grief* in the *loſs*, or of *deſire* in the *want* of them.

A mind that is modelled and prepared with theſe kind of virtues, will thereby be rendered generous and couragious, fit for the undergoing of any kind of trouble or ſuffering, which the providence of God ſhall think fit to call a man unto.

I have now done with the *Firſt* thing I propoſed to treat of, namely, *The Reaſonableneſs and Credibility of the Principles of Natural Religion*; in which I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh the *belief* of *Gods being*, to clear the *natural notions*

tions of his *Excellencies* and *Perfections*, and to deduce the *obligation* of *Moral Duties*, from the belief and acknowledgment of the Divine Nature and Perfections.

THE

THE SECOND BOOK, OF THE *Wiſdom of Practiſing* the Duties of Natural Religion.

CHAP. I.

Shewing in general how Religion conduces to our Happineſs.

I proceed now to the *ſecond* Part of my deſign, which was to ſhew *The Wiſdom of Practiſing the Duties of Natural Religion.* In which I ſhall endeavour to convince men, how much it is, upon all accounts, their chief happineſs and intereſt to lead a religious and virtuous courſe of life.

Solomon, who is ſo much celebrated in *Scripture* for his wiſdom and knowledg, hath purpoſely written a *Book*, the main argument whereof is to enquire, where-

in

in the chief happineſs of man doth conſiſt: And having in the former part of it ſhewed the inſufficiency of all other things that pretend to it, he comes in the concluſion to fix it upon its true *baſis*, aſſerting every mans greateſt intereſt and happineſs, to conſiſt in being religious.

Eccl. 12. 13. *Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandements: for this is the whole of man.* That is, the ſerious practice of Religion is that which every conſiderate man after all his other diſquiſitions, will find to be his chief intereſt, and that which doth deſerve his utmoſt care and diligence.

And becauſe theſe words of *Solomon*, do ſo fully expreſs that, which is to be the main argument of my following diſcourſe, I ſhall by way of preface or introduction to it, more particularly conſider the commendation which he here gives to the practice of Religion, in that full and ſignificant expreſſion, *this is the whole of man.*

Which words are by the *Septuagint* and *Vulgar* thus rendered, *this is All*, or *Every man.* The word *duty* which is ſupplied by our *Engliſh*, being not in the *original*, or in other *Tranſlations*. *This ought to*

to be the way and course of all mankind, so the *Targum*. *This is the course to which every man is designed*, so the *Syriack*. *This will be most profitable and advantageous to men*, so the *Arabick*. *Hoc est totum hominis*, This is *the whole of man*; so some of our later *Interpreters*, most properly to the scope of the place, it being an usual *Enallage* in the *Hebrew*, *totius universalis pro toto integrante*, *All* for *Whole*.

So that according to these various interpretations of the words, they may contain in them a threefold reference. To the *Essence*, the *Happiness*, the *Business* of man.

According to which the sense of them must be, that Religion, or the *fearing of God* and *keeping his commandements* is a matter of so great consequence to Humane Nature, that

1. The *Essence* or Being of man may be said to consist in it.

2. The great *Business* or duty of man, is to be conversant about it, and to labour after it.

3. The *Happiness* or well-being of man doth depend upon it.

These particulars I shall endeavour to make out by such clear Principles of Reason,

ſon, atteſted to by ſeveral of the wiſeſt *Heathen* Writers, as may be enough to ſatisfy any ſerious man, who is able to underſtand the reaſon and conſequence of things, and will but attend and conſider.

Firſt: Religion is of ſo great importance, that the *Eſſence* of man may be ſaid to conſiſt in it. Man may be conſidered under a twofold notion:

1. In his *ſingle capacity*, according to that principle whereby he is conſtituted in ſuch a rank of creatures.

2. In *Society*, for which man ſeems to be naturally deſigned, and without which he could not well ſubſiſt. Now Religion will appear to be *Eſſential* to him, in both theſe reſpects.

1. As conſidered in his *ſingle capacity*, according to thoſe principles by which he is framed. That which doth conſtitute any thing in its Being, and diſtinguiſh it from all other things, this is that which we call the Form or Eſſence of a thing. Now the things which diſtinguiſh Humane Nature from all other things, are the chief *principles* and foundations of *Religion*, namely, the *Apprehenſion of a Deity*, and an *expectation of a future ſtate after this life*: Which no other creature, be-

below man, doth partake of; and which are common to all mankind, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours that can be used for the suppressing of them.

As for what is commonly alledged in the behalf of *Reason*, it may be observed that in the actions of many *brute creatures*, there are discernable some footsteps, some imperfect strictures and degrees of Ratiocination; such a natural sagacity as at least bears a near resemblance to reason. From whence it may follow, that it is not Reason in the *general*, which is the *Form* of *Humane nature*; But Reason as it is *determined* to actions of Religion, of which we do not find the least signs or degrees in *Brutes*: *Man* being the only creature in this visible world, that is formed with a capacity of worshipping and enjoying his Maker. Nor is this any new opinion, but what several of the antient Writers, Philosophers, Orators, Poets, have attested to; who make the notion of a Deity, and adoration of him, to be the true difference betwixt *Man* and *Beast*.

So *Tully*: *Ex tot generibus nullum est animal præter hominem, quod habeat notitiam aliquam Dei; ipsisq; in hominibus, nulla gens est, neq; tam immansueta, neq;* De Leg. lib. 1.

tam fera, quæ non etiamsi ignoret, qualem habere Deum deceat, tamen habendum sciat. "Amongst all the living creatures "that are in the world, there is none but "Man, that hath any notion of a *Deity*; "and amongst mankind, there is no Na-"tion so wild and barbarous, but pre-"tends to some Religion; whence it should seem that this is the most proper difference betwixt man and beasts. And in another place, he makes this to be the Character of that Reason, which is the Form of man, that it is *vinculum Dei & hominis*, which imports both name and thing.

Of the same sense is that of the *Satyrist*, who speaking of Religion and a sense of Divine things, saith this of it.

——————— separat hoc nos
Jur. sat. 15. *A grege mutorum, atq; ideo venerabile (soli*
Sortiti ingenium, divinorumq; capaces.

"'Tis this, saith he, which doth di-"stinguish us from brute creatures, That "we have souls capable of Divine im-"pressions.

There are abundance of expressions to this purpose in several other of the *Heathen*

then Writers. *That* in *Plutarch*, where he ſtyles irreligion, a kind of *ſtupor* whereby men are as it were deprived of their ſenſes. "And in another place, he "aſſerts it to be an exceeding improper "thing, to aſcribe true reaſon to thoſe, "who do not acknowledg and adore the "Deity. So again *Tully*, *eſſe Deos qui negat, vix eum ſanæ mentis exiſtimem.* I "can hardly think that man to be in his "right mind, who is deſtitute of Religion. And in another place of the ſame *Book*. *Quis hunc hominem dixerit?* &c. "Why "ſhould any one ſtyle ſuch an one a man, "who by what he ſees in the world is "is not convinced of a Deity, and a pro-"vidence, and of that adoration he owes "to the Deity? *Non modo non philoſophos, ſed nec homines quidem fuiſſe dixerim*, (ſaith another). "Men that are "deſtitute of Religion, are ſo far from "being learned philoſophers, that they "ought not to be eſteemed ſo much as "reaſonable men.

De ſuperſtitione.

Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

Lactant.

Tis true, nothing is more ordinary than for ſuch perſons as are *ſceptical* in theſe firſt principles, to entertain great thoughts of themſelves, as if they had conſidered things more deeply, and were arrived unto a higher pitch of reaſon and

wit than others. But yet the plain truth is, they who have not attained to this conviction of placing their chief intereſt in being religious, they are ſo far from exceeding others in *degrees*, that they come ſhort of the very *nature* and *eſſence* of men, as being deſtitute of thoſe firſt Notions concerning truth and falſhood, good and evil, wherein the eſſence of a rational Being doth conſiſt: Beſides their palpable deficiency in ſuch plain conſequences and deductions of Reaſon, as would become thoſe, who in any meaſure pretend to that principle.

So that, by what hath been ſaid, it may appear, that the Definition of *Man* may be rendered as well by the Difference of *Religioſum* as *Rationale*. As for that inconvenience which ſome may object, That Atheiſtical and prophane perſons will hereby be excluded: Why, ſo they are by the other Difference likewiſe; ſuch perſons having no juſt pretence to *Reaſon*, who renounce *Religion*: And it were well, if they might not only be *reckoned* among Beaſts (as they are by the *Pſalmiſt*, where he ſtyles them *brutiſh*), but *driven* out amongſt them likewiſe, and baniſhed from all humane ſociety, as being publick peſts and miſchiefs

chiefs of mankind, ſuch as would debaſe the nobility of our natures to the condition of brute creatures, and therefore are fit only to live amongſt them. Which brings me to the

2*d.* Conſideration of Man as a *ſociable* creature. Religion is *eſſential* to him, in this reſpect alſo; as being the ſureſt bond to tye men up to thoſe reſpective duties towards one another, without which Government and Society could not ſubſiſt.

There is a remarkable paſſage in *Plutarch* to this purpoſe, where he ſtyles Religion, σωτικτικὸν ἁπάσης κοινωνίας, καὶ νομοθεσίας ἔρεισμα, *the cement of all Community, and the chief Baſis of all Legiſlative power.* And in another place he ſays, "That 'tis much "more eaſie to build a City in the open "Air, without any ground to found it "upon, than to eſtabliſh Government "without Religion. *A City* (ſaith he) *may make ſome ſhift to ſubſiſt without Walls, Schools, Theatres, Houſes; nay, without Money, but not without Religion.* Againſt Colotes.

If it were not for this notion of a Deity, and thoſe natural impreſſions which we have concerning Juſtice and Probity, ſo neceſſary for the conſervation of humane ſociety; inſtead of thoſe well-or-

dered Governments and Cities which are now in the world, Mankind must have lived either wild and solitary in Caves and Dens, like savage beasts; or else in troops of Robbers, subsisting upon the spoil and rapine of such as were weaker than themselves.

Nat. Deor. lib. 1. *Pietate sublatâ, fides etiam, & societas humani generis, & una excellentissima virtus justitia tollitur*, saith *Tully*. "Take "but away the awe of Religion, and all "that Fidelity and Justice, so necessary "for the keeping up of humane society, "must perish with it.

'Tis this fear of a Deity, and the sense of our obligation to Him, that is the onely effectual means to restrain men within the bounds of duty. And were this wholly extinguished, there would follow such wild disorders and extravagancies amongst men, as would not leave so much as the face or least shadow of virtue or honesty in the world. There being no kind of vice which men would not abandon themselves unto, considering the impetuousness of their own natural appetites, and the power of external temptations, were this restraint from Religion once removed or abolished.

The

The two chief Oppoſites to Religion, are *Prophaneneſs* and *Superſtition*. Both which are prejudicial to civil Government; the one by *deſtroying* conſcience, the ſtrongeſt obligation to political duties; the other by *perverting* and abuſing it; introducing in the ſtead of it a new *primum mobile*, which raviſheth the ſpheres of Government, and puts them into a præternatural courſe, as a *Noble Author* expreſſeth it. Lord Bacons Eſſays.

The two grand Relations that concern ſociety, are *Government* and *Subjection*: And Irreligion doth indiſpoſe men for both theſe.

1. For *Government*. Without Religion Magiſtrates will loſe that courage and confidence belonging to their ſtations, which they cannot ſo well exert in puniſhing the offences of others, when they are guilty of the ſame or the like themſelves. *Thoſe that ſit on the throne of judgment, ſhould be able to ſcatter away evil with their eyes*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* 20. 8. By their very preſence and looks to ſtrike an awe upon offenders. Which will not be ſo eaſily done, if they lye under the ſame guilt themſelves. *Sine bonitate nulla majeſtas*, ſaith *Seneca*; the very nature of *majeſty* doth denote *Good-*

neſs as well as *Power*. And without this, Governours may eaſily loſe that *Reverence* which is due to them from others, and conſequently that *Authority* which they ought to have over them. When they ceaſe to be Gods in reſpect of their *Goodneſs*, they will ſoon diminiſh in their *Power*. And though they ſhould be able to keep men under, as to their bodies and eſtates, yet will they decline as to that awful love and reverence whereby they ſhould ſway over the hearts and affections of men.

The *Philoſopher* in the fifth *Book* of his *Politicks*, doth lay it down as a rule for Magiſtrates, That they muſt be careful to give publick teſtimonies of their being religious and devout; for which he gives this double reaſon: Becauſe the people will be leſs ſubject to entertain any jealouſie or ſuſpition of *ſuffering injury*, from ſuch whom they believe to be religious: And withal, they will be leſs ſubject to attempt the *doing of injury* againſt ſuch; as knowing that good Magiſtrates are after a more eſpecial manner under the divine favour and protection, *καὶ συμμάχους ἔχονται τοὺς θεούς, having God to fight with them, and for them.* Cap. 11.

2. The

2. The want of this will indiſpoſe men for the condition of *Subjects*, and render them looſe and unſtable in thoſe duties of *obedience* and *ſubmiſſion* required to that ſtate. How can it be expected from that man, who dares affront and deſpiſe God himſelf, that he ſhould have any hearty reverence for His Deputies and Vicegerents?

He that is ſubject only upon the account of *wrath*, and the *power of the ſword which is over him*, will be no longer ſo, when he hath an opportunity of eſcaping or reſiſting that power. Nor is there any poſſible way to ſecure men in their quiet ſubjection and obedience, but by their being obliged *for conſcience-ſake*. Rom. 13. 5. And therefore ſuch kind of perſons, as by their open prophaneneſs and contempt of Religion, do endeavour to deſtroy conſcience from amongſt men, may juſtly be eſteemed as the worſt kind of ſeditious perſons, and moſt pernicious to Civil Government.

That temper of *Prophaneneſs*, whereby a man is diſpoſed to contemn and deſpiſe all Religion (how ſlightly ſoever men may think of it) is much worſe than *Infidelity*, than *Fanaticalneſs*, than *Idolatry*; and of the two, 'tis much more eligible

gible for a man to be an *honeſt Heathen* and a *devout Idolater*, than a *prophane Chriſtian*.

Whatever diſputes have been raiſed, concerning the lawfulneſs of puniſhing men for their diſſenting conſciences in matters of Religion; yet never any man queſtioned the lawfulneſs of puniſhing men, for their prophaneneſs and contempt of all Religion. Such men as renounce conſcience, cannot pretend that they ſuffer for it. And certainly this Vice doth upon many accounts deſerve the greateſt ſeverity of Laws, as being *in its own nature* deſtructive of the very principles of Government, and the peace of all humane Societies: Beſides the miſchiefs *conſequent* upon it, from Divine vengeance.

De Benef. lib. 3.c.6. 'Tis an obſervation of *Seneca*, "That "ſeveral Countries do appoint *ſeveral* "puniſhments for the violation of Reli- "gion, but every Country appoints *ſome*, "and it doth not any where eſcape un- "puniſhed. *Plato* in his Book *de Legibus*, would have it puniſhed capitally, as being a thing of moſt pernicious conſequence to Government. 'Tis a rule in the *Civil Law*, that *Religio contaminata ad omnium pertinet injuriam*; *The abuſe of Religion is to be looked upon as being a com-*

lib. 10.

Lib.4.cap. de Hæret.

a common injury, and every man is concerned, to endeavour a vindication of it. And there are ſome inſtances in ſtory, of Wars that have been undertaken upon this very account, to bring a Nation to puniſhment for that prophaneneſs they have expreſſed towards the Religion they profeſſed and pretended to, as being injurious to mankind, *quod orbis viribus expiari debuit*, as *Juſtin* the Hiſtorian ſpeaks, *which the whole world ought to vindicate and expiate by their common forces.*

Grotius de Jure belli & pacis, l. 2. cap. 20. ſect. 51.

lib. 8.

There can be no aſſurance from looſe irreligious perſons, that they will be faithful in the ordinary duties belonging to their ſeveral ranks and ſtations. And as for any extraordinary Heroical action, by which the publick welfare is to be promoted, men that are without conſcience of Religion, and a ſenſe of Virtue, can never apply themſelves to any thing of that kind, as having their minds deſtitute of all ſuch principles as are ſublime and generous, without any the leaſt ſeed of honour, and piety, and virtue; and therefore they can have no ſparks of magnanimity, nor any the leaſt inclination to actions that are truly great and noble.

So

So that upon all these accounts, it is very evident, That Religion is *totum hominis* in this first sense, as it refers to the *Essence* of Man, considered either in his *single capacity*, or as a member of *Society*.

2. Tis so likewise as it refers to the *Business* and Duty of Man, that which he ought to be most intent upon, and conversant about, as to his employment in this world: that *General* calling, in which every man of what rank or quality soever, is to be ingaged. Men are distributed under other *particular* callings, according as their education, abilities, friends, and several opportunities do dispose of them. But the obligation of Religion, being of universal concernment, doth extend to all and every particular, there being none exempted from it. *Hoc est omnis homo.* Every man is concerned in it. And it is *totum hominis* likewise; 'Tis his calling, the chief business about which he is to be employed.

I do not say, that a mans thoughts are always to be taken up about the immediate acts of Religion, any more than a Traveller is always to have his mind actually fixed upon the thought of his journies

nies end. This would be inconſiſtent with the infirmity of our natures, and the neceſſity of our conditions in this world. But yet, as he that is upon a journey, doth ſo order all his *particular* motions, as may be moſt conducible to his *general* end; ſo ſhould men *habitually*, though they cannot *actually*, in every affair have reſpect to their chief end, ſo as to obſerve all the duties of Religion, and never to allow themſelves in any thing againſt the rules of it. And he that hath this care continually upon his mind (though he be but a ſecular perſon) may properly be ſaid to make Religion his *Buſineſs*.

The *Wiſe man* in the beginning of his *Book*, had propoſed it as his great Queſtion to be diſcuſſed, to find out *what was that good for the ſons of men, which they ſhould do under the Heavens, all the days of their lives.* (*i. e.*) What was the chief employment or buſineſs, which they ſhould apply themſelves to in this world? And in the concluſion of his diſcourſe, after an induction and refutation of all other particulars, which may ſeem to have any claim or pretence to this, He aſſerts it to be the buſineſs of Religion, *Fearing God, and keeping his commandments:* Eccleſ. 2. 3.

ments: Suitably to that *Precept* of *Moſes*, Deut. 10. 12. *And now, O Iſrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to ſerve the Lord thy God,* Acts 24. 16. *and keep his commandments*: And the *Practiſe* of St. *Paul*, who made this his daily *exerciſe, to keep his conſcience void of offence, both towards God and towards Man.*

To the Reaſonableneſs of this, ſeveral of the wiſeſt *Heathens* have atteſted. *Moral.* 1. *ad Eudm.* That's a remarkable paſſage in *Ariſtotle* to this purpoſe, where he ſtates that to be the moſt deſirable proportion of all worldly felicities and enjoyments, which is moſt conſiſtent with men's devoting themſelves to the buſineſs of Religion: And that to be either too much or too little of wealth, or honour, or power, *&c.* whereby men are hindred in their meditating upon God, or their worſhipping of him.

Diſſert. 1. 6. So *Epictetus*, diſcourſing concerning the work and buſineſs he was deſigned to, hath this excellent paſſage: "If I had "been made a *Nightingale* or a *Swan*, I "ſhould have employed the time of my "life in ſuch a way as is ſuitable to the "condition of thoſe Creatures: But be-

"ing

"ing made a Man, capable of ſerving and "worſhipping that God, from whom I "had my Being, 'tis but reaſon that I "ſhould apply my ſelf to this, as being "my proper work and buſineſs: τοῦτο μοῦ τὸ ἔργον ἐστι: "And therefore hereunto will "I devote my ſelf, as being the chief "employment to which I am deſigned. "I am now as to the condition of my "body, lame and old (ſaith he in the ſame place) to which he might have added that he was ſickly and deformed; and as for his outward quality, he was poor and under ſervitude, being a ſlave to *Epaphroditus*, one of the *Roman* Courtiers; which are conditions that uſually expoſe men to repining and diſcontent; and yet he concludes it to be his duty, "wholly to devote himſelf to the praiſes "and worſhip of that God, who was the "Author of his Being. Which upbraids ſo many profeſſors of Chriſtianity, who have both more advantages of knowing their duty, and greater engagements upon them to exerciſe themſelves in the duties of Religion.

There is another appoſite Teſtimony to this purpoſe in *Antoninus*. "Every thing "(ſaith he) is deſigned for ſome kind "of work. *Beaſts* and *plants*, the *ſun* "and *Lib. 8. Sect. 19.*

"and *ſtars*; σὺ δὲ πρὸς τί; And what do "you conceive your buſineſs to be? ſen- "ſual pleaſures? Bethink your ſelf a little "better, whether this be ſuitable to your "natural ſentiments, to the nobility of "your mind, and thoſe excellent faculties "with which you are endowed.

Now 'tis the uſual courſe of men to apply themſelves to that as their chief buſineſs, by which their intereſt is moſt promoted, and which may moſt conduce to that main end which they propoſe to themſelves. And can any thing be more reaſonable, than for that to be the chief *buſineſs* of a man's life, which is the chief end of his *Being*?

3. Religion is *totum hominis*, with reſpect to the *Happineſs* and well-being of Man. That is properly ſaid to be the chief end or Happineſs of a thing, which doth raiſe its nature to the utmoſt perfection of which it is capable, according to its rank and kind. This is the *chief end* which he ought to propoſe, that alone wherein his true felicity doth conſiſt, that which doth advance his nature to the utmoſt perfection it is capable of. The chief good belonging to a Vegetable or Plant, is to grow up to a ſtate of Maturity, to continue to its natural period, and

and to propagate its kind, which is the utmoſt perfection that kind of Being is capable of. And whereas ſenſitive creatures, beſides thoſe things which are common to them with Plants, have likewiſe ſuch faculties, whereby they are able to apprehend external objects, and to receive pain or pleaſure from them: Therefore the Happineſs proper to them, muſt conſiſt in the perfection of theſe faculties, namely, in ſenſible pleaſures, in the enjoyment of ſuch things as may be grateful to their ſenſes. But now Mankind (if we allow it to be a diſtinct rank of Creatures, ſuperior to Brutes) being endowed with ſuch faculties, whereby 'tis made capable of apprehending a Deity, and of expecting a future ſtate after this life; It will hence follow, That the proper happineſs of Man muſt conſiſt in the perfecting of theſe faculties, namely, in ſuch a ſtate as may reconcile him to the Divine favour, and afford him the beſt aſſurance of a bleſſed immortality hereafter: Which nothing elſe but Religion can ſo much as pretend to.

'Tis true indeed, the nature of *Man*, by reaſon of thoſe other capacities common to him with *Plants* and *Brutes*, may ſtand in need of ſeveral other things, to

render his condition pleaſant and comfortable in this world, as *Health*, *Riches*, *Reputation*, *Safety*, &c. Now herein is the great advantage of Religion, that beſides the principal work which it doth for us, in ſecuring our future eſtates in the other world, it is likewiſe the moſt effectual means to promote our happineſs in this world.

In my diſcourſe of this I ſhall firſt ſuggeſt ſomething more *generally*, concerning the nature of our chief end; And then deſcend to thoſe *particulars*, which are eſteemed to be the chief ingredients to a ſtate of Happineſs.

Under the *firſt* of theſe I ſhall ſpeak briefly to theſe Three things.

1. There is a neceſſity that every Man who will act rationally ſhould propoſe to himſelf ſome chief ſcope and end.

2. The chief end of every thing muſt be of ſuch a nature, as may be moſt fit to promote the perfection of that thing in its rank and kind.

3. This in rational Beings which are capable of it, muſt conſiſt in a communion with, and a conformity unto the chief Good, and conſequently in being religious.

1. Ther

1. There is a neceſſity that every man who will act rationally ſhould propoſe to himſelf ſome chief ſcope or end. The having of an end, is not ſo much a *moral duty*, which ſuppoſeth a liberty of acting, as a *natural principle*, like that of the deſcent of heavy bodies; men muſt do ſo, nor can they do otherwiſe. Such is the principle of ſelf-preſervation in all things; and this of acting for an end, in all rational agents. The moſt looſe and profligate wretches that are, do and muſt act for an end, even in thoſe very courſes, wherein they put the thought of their future ſtate and their laſt account far from them. The very ſuppreſſing and hardening themſelves againſt the thought of their true end, is in order to their preſent peace and quiet, which they do erroneouſly ſubſtitute in the room of their chief end. That wherein men are commonly defective, is in not exciting the thought of their chief end, and not ſufficiently conſidering and ſtating in their own minds, the moſt proper means for the attaining of it. There are too many in the world that do αυτοσχεδιζειν τον βιον, live *ex tempore*, without any particular reference to their chief end, being im-

merſed only in preſent matters, *animalia ſine præterito & futuro*, without any regard to what is paſt or future; like Ships upon the vaſt Ocean, without any Compaſs or Pilot, that do rather *wander* than *travel*, being carried up and down according as every *wind* or *tide* doth drive them. And this the *Philoſopher* doth worthily brand with the name of folly; *Vita ſine propoſito, ſtultitiæ argumentum eſt*; "No great-
Seneca. "ter argument of fooliſhneſs, than for a "man not to be fixed upon ſome parti-
Idem Epiſt. 85. "cular deſign. *Proponamus oportet, finem ſummi boni, ad quem omne factum noſtrum dictúmve reſpiciat; veluti navigantibus, ad ſidus aliquod dirigendus eſt curſus*, ſaith the ſame *Author*. "There ought always "to be ſome particular ſcope and mark "propoſed, as the main end and drift of "all our actions, as the ſtar by which "we are to be guided in our voyage.
Epiſt. 31. *Non diſponet ſingula, niſi cui jam vitæ ſuæ ſumma propoſita eſt.* 'Twill be a hard mat-"ter to proportion out particulars, till "we know what is the main ſum. This is the true ground of the common miſtakes amongſt men, whilſt they deliberate concerning the ſeveral parts of their lives, but neglect the ſtating of what

ſhould

ſhould be the main deſign of the whole. He that intends to ſhoot at any thing, muſt ſo manage the whole action, in levelling his arrow, and regulating his hands, and exerting his ſtrength ſo as may be moſt advantageous for hitting the mark. As the *efficient* is in *natural*, ſo is the *end* amongſt *moral* cauſes, of principal efficacy. 'Tis this which is the chief rule of all our actions. And therefore there is a neceſſity that ſome end be propoſed and fix'd upon.

2. The chief end of every thing muſt be of ſuch a nature, as may be moſt fit to promote the perfection of that thing in its rank and kind. Any thing that is ſhort of this, may be a means, or a ſubordinate end; but cannot be the chief and ultimate end, if there be any thing deſireable beyond it; τέλος ἐστὶν οὗ παραγενομένου μηδένος ἔτι προσδεόμεθα, ſaith *Ariſtotle*; That is truly the chief end, which is deſired for it ſelf; *which being once obtained, we want no more*; "That which doth ſatiate and fill up the "deſires. *Hæc nihil vacare patitur loci, totum animum tenet, deſiderium omnium tollit, ſola ſatis eſt*, (ſaith *Seneca*). In brief, 'tis that ſtate, wherein a thing enjoys all

Mag. Moral. lib. 2. cap. 2.

Epiſt. 74.

that good that 'tis capable of, and which is moſt ſuitable to its nature.

3. This in rational Creatures muſt conſiſt, in a communion with, and a conformity to the ſupreme good; and conſequently, in being religious. Which is the meaning of thoſe Scripture-expreſſions, of *walking with God*, and *as becomes the ſons of the Moſt High; being followers of him; holy as he is holy; being made partakers of a divine nature.* And to this the Philoſophers do likewiſe conſent. This is the meaning of that ſpeech in *Pythagoras*, τέλος ἐστὶ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ, "Every mans chief end ſhould be a reſemblance to God, a being made like to the Deity. So *Plato* and *Epictetus* will have it to conſiſt in *following of God*, τέλος ἐστὶ ἕπεσθαι θεῷ. And another, *imitari quem colis*, in imitating him whom we worſhip. So *Seneca*, *Summum bonum eſt, quod honeſtum eſt, & quod magis admirêre, ſolum bonum eſt quod honeſtum eſt.* Not only the chief, but the only good doth conſiſt, in what is honeſt and virtuous. Now the fruition of God cannot conſiſt in any external union or contact of our ſouls with the Deity, which Spirits are not capable of; nor in any meer ſpeculation, or intellectual

Epiſt. 74.

tellectual gazing upon his excellencies: But in ſuch an influence, whereby he doth communicate to us, ſuch divine qualities, as will exalt our faculties beyond their natural ſtate, and bring them into an aſſimilation and conformity to the moſt perfect *Idea* of Goodneſs, together with an inward ſenſation of the effects of this in our ſelves.

Having thus diſpatched what I had to ſuggeſt concerning the nature of Happineſs in *general*, I proceed to ſpeak to ſuch *particulars*, as are eſteemed to be the moſt uſual ingredients into ſuch a ſtate, and which do conduce to the compleating of it: whether they concern

- Our *preſent* condition in this world; either our
  - *External* well-fare; conſiſting in
    1. *Health.*
    2. *Liberty, Safety, Quiet.*
    3. Poſſeſſions; with reſpect either to the ſufficiency of them, for anſwering our neceſſities; which is called *Riches* or *Profit*: Or to
    4. The Delight or Satisfaction we receive in theſe enjoyments, in the uſe and ſuitableneſs of the things we poſſeſs; which is called *Pleaſure.*
    5. The Eſteem which we have amongſt good men, whereby we are rendered acceptable and uſeful to others; ſtyled *Honour* or *Reputation.*
  - *Internal* well-fare, or the happineſs of our minds; which doth conſiſt in theſe two things.
    1. The due *regulating* and *exalting of our faculties* to their proper function.
    2. The *Peace, Joy, Contentment*, conſequent thereupon.
- The happineſs of our *future* ſtate. This doth conſiſt in ſuch a fruition of the ſupreme

ſupreme good, as our ſouls are capable of; and muſt depend upon ſuch courſes, as can afford us the moſt rational aſſurance of bleſſedneſs and glory hereafter.

Now I ſhall endeavour to make it out by plain reaſon, that the Happineſs of our condition, in all theſe reſpects, doth depend upon Religion. And that not only *morally*, upon account of that reward, which virtuous actions do entitle a man unto, from a juſt and wiſe providence; but *naturally* alſo, by reaſon of that *phyſical* efficacy which the duties of Religion have, to procure for us all thoſe things wherein our temporal happineſs conſiſts; to promote the well-fare, not only of particular perſons, but of publick Communities of Mankind in general, and of the whole Univerſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

How Religion conduces to our preſent Happineſs in this world: *And firſt to the happineſs of the* Outward man. 1. *In reſpect of* Health.

AND becauſe theſe things I have mentioned, (eſpecially thoſe of them which concern our external happineſs in this world) are the great aims and deſigns, by which the generality of men are chiefly ſwayed in their actions; and therefore like to prove very powerful motives to make men religious, if they could be once effectually perſwaded, that Religion is the moſt proper means for the attaining of theſe things: I ſhall therefore endeavour to make out this truth, by the plaineſt and moſt convincing evidence that may be. And the rather becauſe in ſuch kind of aſſertions, as are beſides the common opinion, and ſeem paradoxes, men will be apt to be jealous of their being impoſed upon by ſome kind of Sophiſm or Fallacy. In

In order to this, I ſhall obſerve this method: Firſt, I ſhall endeavour to ſtate and define the nature of theſe things, and to ſhew wherein the true notion of them doth conſiſt. And then proceed to the proof of this propoſition, That Religion is the moſt proper means to procure and promote theſe ends. And beſides the evidence to this purpoſe, from the concurrent *opinions* of wiſe men, in ſeveral ages; I ſhall likewiſe make them out both by *reaſon*, and by *experience*, which are all the kind of arguments that ſuch matters are capable of.

Only I muſt premiſe one Caution; that when I ſay Religion is the cauſe of theſe things, the meaning is not, that it is ſo neceſſary and ſo infallible a cauſe, as can never fail of its effect. This would not be conſiſtent with our dependent condition, there being nothing in this world ſo much under the power of humane endeavours, but that the providence of God may interpoſe for the diſappointment of it. To whom it muſt be left, to make what reſerved caſes he pleaſes from the ordinary courſe of things. But though it be not an *infallible* cauſe, yet is it ſuch a cauſe as doth *generally* and ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ, produce its effect: And all mankind do think

think it a ſufficient inducement, to apply their endeavours unto ſuch courſes for the procuring of any thing, as are the beſt means to be had, and do for the moſt part effect the ends they are deſigned for.

This being premiſed, I doubt not but to offer ſuch arguments for the proof of theſe things, as ſhall be ſufficient for the conviction of any man who will but underſtand and conſider them.

I begin with the Firſt. The wellfare of our *preſent condition* in reſpect of our *outward-man* doth depend upon Religion.

Firſt, Religion is the beſt means for *Health*. By Health I mean ſuch a conſtitution of our bodies, whereby our members and faculties are inabled for the due performance of their natural functions, and freed from pain; 'tis properly oppoſed to *ſickneſs* or Diſeaſe. As for the infirmities of old age, theſe are ſo eſſential to all living creatures, ſo neceſſarily ſpring from the very principles of our natures, that though they may be ſomewhat leſſened and alleviated, yet are they not capable of any complete remedy.

This bleſſing of Health is ſo neceſſary to our well-beings in this world, that with-

without it, we cannot enjoy any thing elſe, no not our own ſelves; inſomuch that men do, and may juſtly put a great value upon it, and are willing to purchaſe it at any rate. And therefore to all ſuch, this conſideration muſt needs be a very powerful motive.

Now I ſhall make it plain that this doth depend upon Religion

{ *Morally.*
{ *Naturally.*

1. *Morally*, By reaſon of thoſe bleſſings of this kind, which by the light of nature men may reaſonably expect from the goodneſs of God, upon the obſervance of his laws; beſides the ſeveral aſſertions and promiſes in Scripture to this purpoſe, where ſin is often repreſented as the meritorious cauſe of ſickneſs, and diſeaſes are often threatned, and accordingly inflicted as the due rewards of ſin: And on the other ſide, upon mens obſerving the duties of Religion, God promiſes to *take away ſickneſs from the midſt of them*, to beſtow upon them *health* and *length of days*. *The fear of the Lord and departing from evil, ſhall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.* Prov.

Deut. 28. 61. Exod. 23. 25. Deut. 7. 15.

Prov. 4. 22. Isa. 58. 8. *Prov.* 3. 7, 8. *Prov.* 11. 19. As righteousneſs tendeth to life, ſo he that purſueth evil, *purſueth it to his own death.* Chap. 2. 22, *The wicked ſhall be cut off from the earth, and the tranſgreſſours ſhall be rooted out of it.*

2. Religion is the *natural* cauſe of health, which may appear upon this twofold reaſon; becauſe it doth remove thoſe things that will hinder it, and doth promote ſuch things as will help it.

1. It doth *removere prohibens*, it is apt to prevent and remove ſuch things as are the great impediments of our health. Nothing is more evident, than that there are ſeveral vices which have a phyſical efficacy in the producing of diſeaſes, as all kind of intemperance of body, all inordinate paſſions of mind; to one of which, the greateſt part of the ſickneſs amongſt men may be aſcribed; and conſequently the virtues oppoſite to theſe, Temperance, Sobriety, Moderation, muſt needs have a natural cauſality for the hindring of theſe diſeaſes. 'Tis by Religion that men are inabled to prevent all ſuch exceſſes as are prejudicial to nature, to repreſs all ſuch violent tranſports of paſſion, Hatred, Anger, Fear, Sorrow, Envy, *&c.* as are in themſelves very pernicious

nicious to our bodily health, and by that violent commotion, which they are apt to put the humours into, do ſometimes cauſe preſent ſickneſs, and always lay in us the ſeeds of future Diſeaſes.

2. It doth *promovere adjuvans*, promote all ſuch things as may moſt effectually conduce to the improving of our health; by obliging us upon the account of duty and conſcience, to a careful obſervance of the moſt proper means to this end: Keeping us within due bounds in our eating, drinking, exerciſe; preſerving our minds in an equal frame of ſerenity and calmneſs; ſupporting our ſpirits with contentation and chearfulneſs under every ſtate of life; ſo that nothing can be more true than that of *Solomon*, That *A cheerful mind doth good like a medicine, and makes a healthy countenance*; whereas *heavineſs* and cares will break *a mans ſpirit and make it ſtoop.* Prov. 17. 22. 15. 13. 12. 25.

I know there are other means to be made uſe of in order to the procuring of health, various kinds of Medicaments to be applyed by the art of Phyſick, according as the nature of ſeveral diſeaſes ſhall require, which Religion doth oblige a man not to neglect: But yet this I think may be truely ſaid, That thoſe who

who are moſt expert in the profeſſion of Phyſick, are not able to preſcribe any *Catholicon*, which ſhall more effectually operate, both by way of *prevention* and *cure*, than the obſervance of thoſe duties which Religion and virtue do oblige us unto.

Nor is this true only in Theory and Speculation, but it may appear to be ſo upon common experience, to which I ſhall appeal for the further confirmation of it. What kind of perſons are thoſe who enjoy the beſt ſtate of health and the longeſt lives? Are they not ſuch generally who are moſt ſober and regular in their converſations, moſt temperate as to their *bodies*, moſt free from all kind of inordinate paſſions, fierceneſs, anxiety, cares as to their *minds*? 'Tis
Deut. 34. 7. ſaid of *Moſes*, that *though he were exceeding old, yet his eye was not dim, nor was his natural force abated.* Which (amongſt other cauſes) may be aſcribed to thoſe eminent virtues he was endowed with, the temperance of his body, and meekneſs of his ſpirit. That *beloved Diſciple* whoſe thoughts and writings ſeem to be wholly taken up with the Divine virtue of Love, is upon account of this temper of his mind, thought to have enjoyed

joyed a more vigorous old age than any of the reſt: Such a power is there in Religion, though not wholly to prevent the infirmities of old age, yet in a great meaſure to alleviate and abate them.

And on the other ſide, if we conſult experience; Who are the men moſt obnoxious to diſeaſes? are they not ſuch generally as are moſt vicious in their lives? moſt given to ſurfeits, debaucheries and lewdneſs, whereby they do ſo far inflame their blood and waſt their ſpirits, as not to live out half their days: Inſomuch that no man of ordinary prudence, who is to take a Leaſe for lives, will be content (if he can well avoid it) to chuſe ſuch a one whom he knows to be vicious and intemperate.

But theſe things are ſo obvious to common experience, that I need not enlarge upon them: Only I would not be miſtaken. I do not ſay that none of thoſe are Religious, who are liable to diſeaſes, and are taken away in their younger years; or that all ſuch are religious, who are free from diſeaſes, and live to old age. Some may be naturally of ſo tender and brittle a make, that every little blow will break them; others of ſo tough and ſtrong a conſtitution, as

to hold out againſt many batteries and aſſaults; and yet neither of theſe to be aſcribed, either to the vices of the one, or the virtues of the other, but do rather belong to their condition and temper, which being natural, and not falling under the choice of our wills, is not therefore capable of any moral good or evil.

Beſides, there ought allowance to be made (as I ſaid before) for ſuch exempt caſes, as ſhall ſeem good to the providence of God in the government of humane affairs. Some good men may be *taken away from the evil to come*, others may be exerciſed with diſeaſes in their bodies for the cure of their minds, or to make their patience and courage exemplary to others. And ſome that are good men for the main, may yet by their own careleſneſs in uſing the fitteſt means for the preſervation of their health, expoſe themſelves to ſickneſs; none of which can be any prejudice to the thing I have been proving. This being that which I affirm, that ſo far as the infirmities of our natural tempers are capable of remedy by any thing in our power, It is the obſervance

ſervance of the duties of Religion, that doth for the moſt part and generally prove the moſt effectual means to this purpoſe. Which is all I ſhall ſay to the *firſt* thing I propoſed to ſpeak to, concerning the health of our bodies.

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CHAP. III.

How Religion conduces to the happineſs of the outward man, in reſpect of Liberty, Safety, *and* Quiet.

SEcondly, Religion is the moſt proper means to procure our external *ſafety*, *liberty*, *quiet*.

By *ſafety*, I mean a freedom from thoſe common dangers and miſchiefs which others are expoſed to.

By *liberty*, the being at our own diſpoſal, and not under bondage, reſtraint, impriſonment.

By *quiet*, an exemption from thoſe many moleſtations and troubles by reaſon of diſappointments, enmity, contentions, whereby the conditions of ſome men are rendered very burdenſome and uncomfortable.

I put theſe things together, becauſe of their near affinity to one another.

Now Religion is both the *moral* and the *natural* cauſe of theſe things.

1. 'Tis

1. 'Tis the *moral* cauſe of them, upon account of that divine protection and aſſiſtance, which the light of nature will aſſure us we are intituled unto in the doing of our duties; beſides the many aſſertions and promiſes in Scripture to this purpoſe; of being protected in our ways, and ſecured in times of danger. *If you will keep my ſtatutes, ye ſhall dwell in the land in ſafety. Whoſo hearkeneth to me ſhall dwell ſafely, and ſhall be quiet from the fear of evil. There ſhall no evil happen to the juſt, but the wicked ſhall be filled with miſchief. The Lord delivers the righteous out of all their troubles. When a mans ways pleaſe the Lord, he will make his enemies to be at peace with him.* Lev. 25. 18 Prov. 1. 33. Prov. 12. 21. Pſal. 34. 17

2. 'Tis the natural cauſe of theſe bleſſings, by preventing or removing all ſuch things, whereby the contrary evils are occaſioned. The moſt uſual and general cauſe of mens ſufferings, is from the neglect of their duty, and the violations of law; they are obnoxious to the puniſhments of baniſhment, impriſonment, loſs of goods, or of life, upon the account of ſome illegal irreligious acts, murder, theft, ſedition, injuring of others, needleſs contentions, medling in other mens affairs where they are not concerned. 'Tis

obſervable, that in the legal form of inditing men for crimes, our Law doth aſcribe their guilt to their want of Religion, their *not having the fear of God before their eyes*, which doth diſpoſe them to commit ſuch acts as makes them obnoxious to legal puniſhment. Now nothing can ſo effectually prevent ſuch things as Religion. This will teach men to obey laws, and ſubmit to government: This will keep them within the bounds of their duty, both towards God and man: This will remove all thoſe dividing principles, of ſelfiſhneſs, and pride, and covetouſneſs: It will teach them charity and meekneſs and forbearance, to ſtudy publick peace and common good, to be generous and large in their well-wiſhing and their well-doing: Which are the moſt proper means to provide for our own quiet and ſafety.

And the truth of this may be evident likewiſe from common experience; by which it will appear, that for the general, no kind of men do enjoy ſo much external peace and freedom and ſafety, as thoſe that are truly religious. The *Apoſtle* ſeems to appeal to that common notion in the minds of all men, concerning the ſafety belonging to innocence, when he puts

puts it by way of queſtion, *who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good?* Implying, that 'tis a thing generally known and taken notice of, that there is a kind of natural reverence and awe amongſt the worſt of men, towards ſuch as are innocent and virtuous.

And on the other ſide no men do incur ſo many hazards, moleſtations, contentions, as thoſe that are vicious; what from their violations of law, their needleſs provocations of thoſe they converſe with, being ſcarce ever free from danger and trouble; which the *Wiſe-man* ſeems to appeal to, as a thing evident from experience, in thoſe ſhort queſtions which he propoſes: *Who hath wo? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath bablings? who hath wounds without cauſe? who hath redneſs of eyes?* 'Tis particularly ſpoken of the drunkard, but 'tis proportionably true of other vices likewiſe. Prov. 23. 29.

There is one objection that lyes very obvious againſt what I have been proving; and that is from thoſe *Scriptures* where 'tis ſaid, that *whoever will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution*, and that *the world ſhould hate them*; beſides what may be alledged from common expe-

rience to this purpose, concerning the sufferings of some that are good men.

To this two things may be said by way of answer.

1. Every thing is not persecution for Religion, which men may be apt to style so. Some persons who for the main may be truly religious, may yet by their own follies and imprudence, expose themselves to needless sufferings. And in such cases, Religion is not to be charged as being the cause of their suffering, but their defect in it, and mistakes about it.

2. There may be (as was said before) some exempt cases from the general rule, and such must those be granted to be, which concern times of persecution; when Religion will be so far from protecting a man, that it will rather expose him to danger and sufferings. And such were those primitive times to which these *Scriptures* do refer, when it seemed good to divine providence, to make use of this as one means for the propagating of Christianity in the world, namely, by the suffering of those that professed it. And in such cases, when men are persecuted properly upon the account of Religion, God doth usually compensate their outward sufferings with some inward advantage,

sup-

ſupplying them with ſuch patience and courage, as will ſupport them with joy and comfort in their ſuffering for that which is good. But then it muſt withall be granted, that theſe *Scriptures* are not equally applicable to ſuch other times and places, when and where the true Religion is publickly profeſſed and encouraged, when *Kings are nurſing fathers*, and *Queens nurſing mothers* to the Church; becauſe in ſuch times and places, the profeſſion of Religion will be ſo far from hindering, that it will rather promote a mans ſecular advantage.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

How Religion conduces to the happineſs of the outward man in reſpect of Riches.

THirdly, as to our Eſtates and Poſſeſſions, I ſhall ſhew that Religion is the cauſe of *Riches*. In order to the proof of this, the firſt thing to be enquired into, is, what is the true nature of *wealth* or *riches*, and wherein it may properly be ſaid to conſiſt. And here it is to be noted, that the word *Riches* is capable of a twofold ſenſe,

{ *Abſolute*,
{ *Relative*.

1. In the more *abſolute* ſenſe, it may be defin'd to conſiſt in ſuch a meaſure of eſtate as may be ſufficient for a mans occaſions and conveniencies; when his poſſeſſions are ſo proportioned, as may fully anſwer all the neceſſities of his condition, and afford him a comfortable ſubſiſtence, according to his quality, the ſtation where-

wherein he is placed. In which ſenſe men of all ranks and degrees are capable of being rich. A Husbandman, or an ordinary Tradesman may be as truly ſtyled a rich man, as he that is a Gentleman, or a Lord, or a King. Though perhaps what theſe can very well afford to fling away upon their diverſions, be more than all the eſtate and poſſeſſions which the other can pretend to. And upon this ground it is, that all men will grant, one perſon to be as truly *liberal* in giving but a *penny*, or a poor *mite*, as another in giving a *hundred pounds*, becauſe theſe things are to be meaſured by the different conditions of the givers: And a man may as well be rich with a *little*, as *liberal* with a *little*.

2. In the more *relative* ſenſe, *Riches* may be deſcribed to conſiſt in the having of large Poſſeſſions, when a mans Eſtate and Revenue is of ſuch a proportion as is commonly eſteemed *Great*; whether with relation to the generality of other men, and ſo only thoſe at the upper end of the world are capable of being counted rich; or elſe with reſpect to others of the ſame rank and order, and ſo all ſuch are counted rich, who do in their poſſeſſions exceed the common ſort of thoſe that

that are of the ſame rank with them; this kind of wealth conſiſting properly in compariſon: There being not any one determinate ſum, or proportion of revenue, to which the name of riches may be appropriated, but that it may be as much below the occaſions of ſome perſons, as it is above the condition of others who yet live plentifully.

Now the firſt of theſe is the only proper notion of *Riches*, becauſe this alone is agreeable to the chief end of wealth, which is to free us from want and neceſſity. And the other may be rather ſtyled, the being proprietour of great poſſeſſions, the meer having of which cannot denominate one a truly rich man for this plain reaſon; becauſe though ſuch poſſeſſions be in themſelves great, yet they may not be ſufficient to free the owner of them from want and poverty, whether in reſpect to his real or imaginary occaſions for more: And that is not Riches which cannot free a man from being poor. And want of neceſſaries, is as truly poverty in him that hath much, as in him that hath but a little. He that in any one condition of life, hath enough to anſwer all his conveniences, ſuch a man is more truly rich than he whoſe revenue is a thouſand times

times greater, if it be not equal either to his occaſions, or to his mind.

Now when it is ſaid, that Religion is the cauſe of Riches, the meaning of this cannot reaſonably be underſtood of Riches in the ſecond ſenſe, as if he that were religious ſhould be thereby advanced to the greateſt poſſeſſions that any man elſe doth enjoy, from the condition of a Peaſant or a Tradesman to that of a Prince. Becauſe this would no more conſiſt with thoſe ſeveral degrees and ſubordinations required to the order of the Univerſe, than it would for every common Souldier to be a General, or every private man to be a King. But the meaning of this propoſition muſt be, that Religion will be a means to ſupply a man with ſuch a ſufficiency as may denominate him rich; and to free him from ſuch neceſſities, whether real or imaginary, as others of his rank and ſtation are liable unto.

So that by what hath been ſaid, it may appear, that the true notion of Riches doth comprehend under it theſe two things.

1. A ſufficiency for a mans occaſions and conveniencies.

2. An acquieſcence of mind, in ſo much as is in it ſelf really ſufficient, and which will

will appear to be ſo, ſuppoſing a man to judg according to right reaſon.

And that this is not a meer fancy or notion, but the moſt proper ſenſe of the word *Riches*, wherein all mankind have agreed, may be made very evident.

Concerning the *firſt* of theſe there can be no colour of doubt. All the ſcruple will be concerning the *ſecond*; Whether that be neceſſary to make a man rich. And to this the *Philoſophers* do generally atteſt. *Ariſtotle* in particular, doth affirm that the true nature of Riches doth conſiſt in the contented uſe and enjoyment of the things we have, rather than in the poſſeſſion of them. Thoſe that out of penuriouſneſs can ſcarce afford themſelves the ordinary conveniences of life out of their large poſſeſſions, have been always accounted poor; nay, he that cannot uſe and enjoy the things he doth poſſeſs, may upon this account be ſaid to be of all others the moſt indigent, becauſe ſuch a one doth truly want the things he hath, as well as thoſe he hath not.

Rhet. lib. 1. cap. 5.

That man who is not content with what is in it ſelf ſufficient for his condition, neither is rich, nor ever will be ſo; becauſe there can be no other *real* limits to his deſires, but that of *ſufficiency*; what-

whatever is beyond this, being boundleſs and infinite. And though men may pleaſe themſelves with an imagination, that if they had but ſuch an addition to their Eſtates, they ſhould then think they had enough; yet that is but a meer imagination, there being no real cauſe, why they ſhould be more ſatisfied then, than they are now.

He that is in ſuch a condition as doth place him above contempt, and below envy, cannot by any enlargement of his fortune be made really more rich, or more happy than he is. And he is not a wiſe man, if he do not think ſo; nor is he in this either wiſe or worthy if he be ſo far ſolicitous as to part with his liberty, though it be but in ſome little ſervilities for the encreaſing of his Eſtate.

Theſe things being premiſed, it may be made very evident, that the deſign of being truly rich, that is, of having enough and being contented, will be moſt effectually promoted by Religion; and that both *Morally* and *Naturally*.

1. *Morally*, upon which account this is by the Philoſophers owned to be one of the rewards belonging to virtue; good men only having a Moral title to wealth upon account of fitneſs and deſert. There

are

are many assertions and promises in Scripture to this purpose, of being prospered in our *stores* and *labours*, and *all that we set our hands unto*, of *lacking nothing that is good for us.* 'Tis this that must intitle us to the blessing of God, and 'tis *the blessing of God that maketh rich.* *Solomon* speaking of *Religion* under the name of *Wisdom*, saith, that *in her left hand are riches, durable riches*, that she causes those that love her to *inherit substance*, and doth *fill their treasures.* And the *Apostle* tells us, that *Godliness hath the promises of this life.*

Psal. 34. 10

Prov. 3. 16

c. 7. 8, 18. 8. 21.

2. Religion is a *natural* cause of riches, with reference to those two chief ingredients required to such a state; namely, the supplying of us with a plentiful sufficiency as to our possessions, and a satisfaction as to our minds.

1. A sufficiency as to our estates and possessions. There are but these two ways that can contribute to the improving of mens possessions, namely, the *Art* of *getting* and of *keeping.* Now Religion is an advantage to men in both these respects. Nothing can be more evident than that there are many virtues which upon these accounts have a natural tendency to the increasing of mens estates, as diligence in

our

our callings, *The diligent hand maketh rich*; heedfulneſs to improve all fitting opportunities, of providing for our ſelves and families, being provident in our expences, keeping within the bounds of our income, not running out into needleſs debts: In brief, all the lawful arts of gain and good husbandry, as to the exerciſe of them, are founded in the virtues which Religion teaches.

On the contrary it is plain, that there are many kind of ſins, which have a direct natural efficacy for the impoveriſhing of men: As all kind of ſenſuality, and voluptuouſneſs, idleneſs, prodigality, pride, envy, revenge, *&c.* of all which may be ſaid what *Solomon* ſays of one of them, that they *bring a man to a morſel of bread, and clothe him with raggs.*

2. And as for the ſecond requiſite to riches, ſatisfaction of mind with our conditions, and a free uſe of the things we enjoy. This is the property of Religion, that it can inable a man to be content with his eſtate, and to live comfortably without ſuch things as others know not how to want. And the ability of being content with a little, may be much more truely called riches, than the having of

much, without being ſatisfied therewith. Tis better to be in health with a moderate appetite, than to be continually eating and drinking under the diſeaſe of a voracious appetite or a Dropſy: And in this ſenſe, *A little that the righteous hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly.* Pſal. 37. 16.

But this may appear likewiſe from experience. Let any man impartially conſider, what kind of perſons thoſe are amongſt the generality of men, who in their ſeveral degrees and orders are counted moſt able, and moſt wealthy, and it will appear that they are ſuch as are moſt ſerious in the matter of Religion, moſt diligent in their callings, moſt juſt and honeſt in their dealings, moſt regular and ſober in their converſations, moſt liberal towards any good work; upon which account it is, that ſuch places, where men have the opportunity of being inſtructed in, and excited to the Duties of Religion, do thereupon thrive and flouriſh moſt; it being one property of Religion to civilize men, and make them more inquiſitive in learning, and more diligent in practiſing their ſeveral profeſſions.

And

And as for contentment of mind, this being in it ſelf a virtue as well as a priviledg, it is not to be attained but upon the account of Religion; nor are there any that enjoy it, but ſuch as are truely virtuous.

There are ſeveral objections that may be made againſt what I have been proving, but all of them capable of a plain and ſatisfactory ſolution.

1. There are ſome kind of virtues that ſeem to have a contrary tendency; as charity to thoſe that want, bounty and liberality to any good work, which in *Ariſtotles* judgment is ſcarce conſiſtent with growing rich. *Ethic. lib. 4. cap. 1.*

By that ſaying of *Ariſtotle*, may be meant riches in the ſecond ſenſe, as it denotes large poſſeſſions, which this virtue of liberality doth not naturally promote; but it may very well conſiſt with riches in the firſt and moſt proper notion of it, as it denotes ſufficiency for our occaſions; and the ability of contributing in ſome proportion, towards any worthy and charitable work, is in the eſteem of every good man one of thoſe occaſions and conveniencies required to ſuch a ſufficiency, and cannot any more be a prejudice to it, than it would be for a

man to lay up ſome part of his wealth in the ſafeſt place, to lend it out upon the beſt intereſt, to part with it for the purchaſe of the ſame favour and aſſiſtance from others in the like exigencies; to lay it out upon his pleaſure, with reſpect to that inward comfort and ſatisfaction, which doth accompany the conſcience of doing worthy things. And beſides all this, experience will aſſure us, that there is a ſecret bleſſing which doth for the moſt part accompany ſuch actions; ſo that men grow the richer and not the poorer for them: And they that in this kind *ſow bountifully*, do very often, even in this world, *reap bountifully*.

2. There are ſome kind of vices that ſeem to have a tendency to the enriching of men, as *fraud*, *extortion*, *ſordidneſs*, all kind of unlawful ways of getting and keeping an eſtate. But to this it may be ſaid,

1. Theſe vices may tend to the encreaſing of mens poſſeſſions, but not to the making of them truely rich: And 'tis a plain argument that ſuch perſons do not think themſelves to have a ſufficiency, who can apply themſelves to ſuch wretched courſes for the getting of more.

2. 'Tis

2. 'Tis commonly ſeen upon experience, that there is a ſecret curſe attends ſuch practiſes, a canker that eats into ſuch gain, a hole in the bottom of the bag, by which it inſenſibly dreins out and waſts away. *As the Partridg ſitteth upon eggs and hatcheth them not, ſo he that getteth riches, and not by right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his days, and at the end ſhall be a fool.* As that ſilly bird doth ſometimes take much needleſs care and pains, in ſitting upon and cheriſhing ſubventaneous eggs, ſuch as can never be fruitful, which (as *Naturaliſts* obſerve) that creature is very ſubject unto, or as the fecund eggs of that bird being laid upon the ground, are many times trod upon by paſſengers or wild beaſts, after it hath beſtowed much pains for the hatching of them: So are the wicked deſigns of gain often diſappointed in the *Embryo*; and the contrivers of them, inſtead of approving themſelves to be more wiſe and ſubtile men than others, do appear at laſt to be fools. He that will carefully obſerve the uſual courſe of things in the world, may from his own experience find inſtances enough, to confirm thoſe ſayings of the wiſe man; *There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth, and* Jer. 17. 11. Prov. 11. 24.

there is that withholdeth more than is
cap. 13. 7. *meet, but it tendeth to poverty. Wealth*
11, 22. *gotten by vanity ſhall be diminiſhed. The wealth of the ſinner is laid up for the*
cap. 22. *juſt. He that oppreſſeth the poor to in-*
16. *creaſe his riches, ſhall ſurely come to want.*
cap. 28. 8. *He that by unjuſt gain increaſeth his ſubſtance, ſhall gather it for him that will pity the poor.*

3. There are ſome good men that are
Jam. 2. 5. poor. And 'tis ſaid that *God hath choſen the poor of this world*, to receive the Goſpel and *to be rich in faith.* To this it may be ſaid,

1. The providence of God may ſo order it ſometimes, as to reduce good men to great exigencies, *to wander up and down in ſheepskins and goatskins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented.* But then theſe are ſuch particular exempt caſes, as are not ſuitable to the moſt uſual and general courſe of things. And beſides, ſuch as are good men, may ſometimes be defective in ſeveral of thoſe duties which Religion doth oblige them to, diligence, caution, *&c.* And the poverty of ſuch may juſtly be aſcribed to their defect in Religion.

2. As for that ſcripture that *God hath choſen the poor in this world*, It is not to

to be underſtood in the more *abſolute* ſenſe, for ſuch as want neceſſaries, becauſe 'tis plain from other Texts, that though ſome of the primitive believers, were by reaſon of the perſecution of thoſe times reduced to great exigencies; yet the generality of the reſt were very liberal in their contributions towards them. But it muſt be underſtood in the *relative* ſence, concerning ſuch as might be ſtyled comparatively poor, (*i. e.*) ſuch as are of a lower rank and meaner condition than others, and conſequently had leſs temptation to corrupt and ſeduce them, than thoſe that did more abound in theſe earthly things.

CHAP. V.

How Religion conduces to the happineſs of the outward man in reſpect of Pleaſure; *or the chearful enjoyment of outward bleſſings.*

Fourthly, Religion is the moſt proper means to promote the intereſt of *Pleaſure*.

In the handling of this, I ſhall firſt endeavour to ſtate the true nature of *Pleaſure*, and to ſhew what is the moſt proper notion of it. Now *Pleaſure* doth conſiſt in that ſatisfaction which we receive in the uſe and enjoyment of the things we poſſeſs. It is founded in a ſuitableneſs and congruity betwixt the faculty and the object. Thoſe are called pleaſant taſtes and ſmells, which are apt to excite ſuch a gentle motion as is agreeable to the nerves appointed for thoſe functions. Now it cannot be denyed, but that *beaſts* and *inſects* may be ſaid to be capable of pleaſure proper to their kind, as well as *men*. Only

Only this muſt withall be granted, that the more noble and the more capacious the faculties and the objects are, the greater will the delights be that flow from the union of them. Upon which account all intellectual delights, do far exceed thoſe that are ſenſual; and amongſt perſons that are capable of intellectual pleaſures, their enjoyments muſt be greateſt, whoſe faculties are moſt enlarged and moſt vigorous. 'Tis true indeed, men of vitiated and depraved faculties, though they are thereby diſabled for paſſing a true judgment upon the nature of things, being apt to miſtake ſowre for ſweet; yet will it not thence follow, that they are incapable of pleaſure: They may have ſuch peculiar kinds of guſts, as will be able to find a ſatisfaction and ſweetneſs in ſuch things as appear nauſeous and loathſome to others. And 'tis the congruity of things that is the foundation of pleaſure. But then ſuch perſons are beholding to their ignorance and their deluſion, to the diſtemper of their faculties, for their reliſh of theſe things. None but thoſe that are *fooliſh* and *deceived*, and under the ſervitude of *divers luſts*, devoting themſelves to ſuch kind of things for pleaſures. Suppoſing a man to have ſound healthy faculties, ſuch

Tit. 3. 3.

ſuch an one will not be able to find any true ſatisfaction and complacence, but only in thoſe things which have in them a natural goodneſs and rectitude. They muſt be regular objects that have in them a ſuitableneſs to regular faculties.

This being premiſed by way of explication, I ſhall proceed to prove, That Religion is the moſt proper means for the promoting of this intereſt; and this it doth

{ *Morally*,
{ *Naturally*.

1. *Morally*; as it is one of the rewards belonging to virtue, which alone upon its own account doth deſerve all ſuch advantages, as may render its condition pleaſant and comfortable in this world.

Beſides the ſeveral aſſertions and promiſes in Scripture to this purpoſe. *Prov.* 3.17. ſpeaking of Religion under the name of Wiſdom, it is ſaid, that *her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs. The yoke of it is* Matt. 11. *eaſie*, χρηστὸς, gracious and ſweet, *and the* 30. *burden light. The commandments of it* 1 Joh. 5.3. *not grievous.* Gal. 5.22. *The fruits of it are love, and joy, and peace.* The duties of Religion are in ſeveral places of Scripture compared

pared to muſick and to feaſting; and are ſaid to be *ſweeter than the honey and the honey-comb. I delight to do thy will, O my God, Pſal.* 40. 8.

2. Religion is the *Natural* cauſe of *Pleaſure.* Which I ſhall endeavour to make out by Reaſon and Experience.

1. By Reaſon; Religion hath a *natural* efficacy in promoting the intereſt of pleaſure, teaching a man a chearful liberal uſe of the things he enjoys; how to *make his ſoul enjoy good in his labour*; how to ſweeten and allay all the difficulties and troubles of this life. Nor doth it reſtrain men from any ſuch ſenſible pleaſures, as are agreeable to reaſon, or our true intereſts. It only prohibits miſtakes and exceſſes about them, teaches us ſo to regulate our ſelves in the uſe of them, that they may truly deſerve the name of Pleaſure; how to provide againſt that natural emptineſs and vanity, which there is in all ſuch things, whereby they are apt quickly to ſatiate and weary us; and upon this account it may be ſaid to promote rather than hinder the intereſt of Pleaſure.

As for the Pleaſures of the Appetite, theſe abide no longer than till the neceſſities and conveniencies of nature are ſatisfied;

tisfied; and ſo far Religion doth allow of them. When our hunger and thirſt is well appeaſed, all that follows after is but a faint kind of pleaſure, if it be not rather to be ſtyled ſatiety and a burden.

As for thoſe kind of things, which we call by the name of ſports and diverſions, Religion doth likewiſe admit of a moderate uſe of theſe; and what is beyond ſuch a moderate uſe, doth rather tire men, than recreate them: It being as much the property of ſuch things, to weary a man when he is once ſufficiently refreſhed by them, as it is to refreſh him when he is wearied by other things.

We read indeed of *the pleaſures of ſin*; but beſides that they are of a baſer and groſſer kind, 'tis ſaid alſo, that they are
Job 20. 5. *but for a ſeaſon, but for a moment*, and *the end of them is heavineſs*. The ways of ſin may ſeem broad and pleaſant, but
Prov. 5. 5. they *lead down to death, and take hold of hell*. There are ſome vices that ſeem
20. 17. ſweet to the palate, but do after *fill the mouth with gravel*. There are ſeveral ſins which have very ſpecious and tempting appearances, which yet upon trial do
23. 32. *bite like a ſerpent, and ſting like an adder*.

By

By what hath been ſaid, it appears, that Religion is a natural cauſe of promoting theſe ſenſible pleaſures; beſides, that it affords delights incomparably beyond all theſe corporeal things, ſuch as thoſe who are *ſtrangers* to Religion cannot underſtand, and *do not intermeddle with.*

2. But beſides the Reaſons to this purpoſe, it may appear likewiſe from Experience, that the great pleaſure of mens lives is from the goodneſs of them; ſuch only being capable of a free and liberal enjoyment of what they poſſeſs, who know how to regulate themſelves in the fruition of them, to avoid extremities on either hand, to prevent thoſe mixtures of guilt and fear, which will imbitter all their enjoyments. Such perſons only who have *good conſciences* being capable of having a *continual feaſt.*

The great objection againſt this will be, from the difficulty of the duties of mortification, repentance, ſelf-denial, taking up the croſs, *&c.* All which do imply in them a repugnancy to our natures, and conſequently an inconſiſtency with pleaſure.

For anſwer to this it muſt be obſerved, That *difficulty* doth properly ariſe from a diſproportion betwixt the power and the

the work; as when a perſon of little ſtrength is put to carry a great burden, when one of a mean capacity is put to anſwer an hard queſtion in learning. Now ſuppoſing men to retain their vitious habits, it muſt be granted, to be as difficult for ſuch to perform the duties of Religion, or to forbear the acts of ſin, as for a lame and impotent man to run, or for a man under a violent Feaver to be reſtrained from drinking. But ſuppoſe theſe men cured of theſe maladies, and their faculties to be rectified, then all this diſproportion and unſuitableneſs will vaniſh; and thoſe things will become eaſie and delightful, which were before very difficult and unpleaſant. Now it is the property of Religion, that it changes the natures of men, making them *new creatures. It puts off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful luſts, and puts on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.* It removes our vitious habits, and endows the mind with other kind of inclinations and abilities. And though there ſhould be ſome difficulties in the very paſſage from one ſtate to another, yet this ought not to be objected as a prejudice againſt Religion;

ligion; becauſe there are far greater difficulties and pains to be undergone in the ſervice and drudgery of impetuous luſts. The trouble of being cured, is not ſo great as that of being ſick; nor is the trouble of being ſober comparable to that of being debauched and intemperate. That godly ſorrow which is required as one of the firſt acts in the change of our condition, is always accompanied with ſecret pleaſure: And as it is ſaid of *wicked men*, that *in the midſt of laughter their heart is ſorrowful*; ſo may it be ſaid of *good men*, that *in the midſt of their ſorrow their heart is joyful.* And when the conditions of men are once changed, when they are paſſed over to another ſtate, it will then prove as eaſie to them to obſerve the duties of Religion, as it was before to follow their own ſinful inclinations. An evil tree doth not more naturally bring forth evil fruit, than a good tree doth bring forth good fruit.

As for that moroſeneſs and ſowreneſs of carriage which ſome men, who pretend to Religion, are noted for; This is not juſtly to be aſcribed to their Religion, but to their want of it.

it: Joy and chearfulneſs being not only a priviledg, but a duty which Religion doth oblige men to, whereby they are to adorn their profeſſion, and win over others to a love of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

How Religion conduces to our Honour *and Reputation.*

Fifthly, for the intereſt of *Honour* and Reputation. This is one of the greateſt bleſſings which this world can afford, much to be preferred before Riches or Pleaſures, or Life it ſelf. *A good name is rather to be choſen than great riches, and loving favour rather than ſilver and gold.* Prov. 22. 1. One that is a generous virtuous man will chuſe to dye, rather than do any thing that may expoſe him to infamy. St. *Paul* was of this mind; *It were better for me to dye, than that any ſhould make my glorying void.* 1 Cor. 9. 15. And becauſe it is a thing of ſo great excellency, therefore we do pay it, as the beſt ſervice we can do, to God, and to his Deputies, Magiſtrates and Parents. 'Tis by this that we are rendered uſeful and acceptable to others. And beſides the advantage we have by it while we live, 'tis one of thoſe things that will abide after us, when we are gone out of the world; and for

that reaſon a ſpecial regard is to be had to it. And the more wiſe and virtuous any man is, the more care will he take to tranſmit a grateful memory of himſelf to future times; and ſince he muſt be ſpoken of after his departure, to take care that he be well-ſpoken of, that his name may be as a precious oyntment, leaving a perfume behind it, that men may riſe up at the mention of it and call him bleſſed. Nor can any man deſpiſe honour, but he that doth either deſpair of it, or reſolve againſt doing any thing that may deſerve it.

Now honour is properly the eſteem and good opinion which men have concerning the perſon or the actions of another, together with ſuch external expreſſions of reſpect as are ſuitable thereunto.

And I ſhall make it appear, that this kind of happineſs doth depend upon Religion both

{ *Morally*,
{ *Naturally*.

1. *Morally*. Nothing being more generally agreed upon amongſt all the *Philoſophers*, than that honour is the peculiar reward of virtue, and doth not properly

perly belong to any thing elſe. And that ſhame is the proper reward of vice, nor can it belong to any thing elſe.

The Scripture is very copious in expreſſions to this purpoſe. Such as are religious, are ſtyled the *excellent of the earth*, *Pſal.* 16. 3. and ſaid to be *more excellent than their neighbours*. *Prov.* 17. 27. They are *Gods peculiar treaſure*, the *dearly beloved of his ſoul*. *He ſets apart the man that is godly for himſelf*. Though ſuch perſons may be but low in their outward condition; being put to *wander up and down in ſheepskins and goatskins*, *being deſtitute*, *afflicted*, *tormented*, ſeeking for refuge *in deſarts and mountains*, *in dens and caves of the earth*; yet are they, upon the account of Religion, of ſuch an excellent value, that in the judgment of the *Holy Ghoſt*, *the world is not worthy of them*, *Heb.* 11. 37, 38.

cap. 12. 26. Deut. 32. 9 Exod. 19. 5. Jer. 12. 7. Pſal. 4. 3.

The *Wiſe-man* ſpeaking of Religion, ſaith, that *it ſhall be an ornament of grace to thy head, and as a chain about thy neck. Exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee, and bring thee to honour. She ſhall give to thy head an ornament of grace, and a Crown of glory.* God hath engaged himſelf by promiſe to thoſe people that are religious, that *he will ſet them above other nations*;

Prov. 1. 9. Chap. 4. 8, 9.

Deut. 28. 13.

tions; *they ſhall be made the head and not the tail. He will honour thoſe that honour him.* And certainly, he who is the King of Kings, muſt needs be the fountain of honour, and be able to diſpoſe of it as he pleaſes.

1 Sam. 2. 30. Joh. 12. 26.

And on the other ſide, Shame is in *Scripture* ſaid to be the proper reward and conſequent of ſin, eſpecially in the Writings of *David* and *Solomon*. Religion is ſtyled by the name of *wiſdom*, and Sin by the name of *folly*. And the *Wiſe-man* having ſaid, *Prov.* 3. 35, that *the wiſe ſhall inherit glory*, 'tis added, *but ſhame ſhall be the promotion of fools*: It ſhall be *their promotion*; the utmoſt that ſuch perſons ſhall ever attain to, will be but diſgrace; when they are exalted and lifted up, it ſhall prove to their diſparagement, to make their ſhame more conſpicuous. And *Prov.* 13. 5. 'tis ſaid, *A wicked man is loathſome, and cometh to ſhame.* The word tranſlated *loathſome*, properly denotes ſuch kind of perſons to be as nauſeous and offenſive to the judgments of others, as the moſt loathſome unſavoury things are to their taſts or ſmells. They are ſtyled by the name of Wolves and Bears, Swine, Dogs, and Vipers, things both hurtful and hateful.

Men that are truly virtuous, have a reverence

verence paid them by all that know them. And on the other ſide, vicious men are deſpiſed. Not but that wicked perſons may be inwardly honoured, by ſuch as do not know them to be wicked; and on the other ſide, thoſe that are good, may by others be eſteemed and uſed, as being the rubbiſh and off-ſcouring of all things. But this is to be aſcribed chiefly to their miſtake and ignorance of them, whilſt they look upon ſuch perſons as being the moſt dangerous pernicious perſons. But the generality of mankind have heretofore, and ſtill do pay a reverence to any perſon whom they believe to be innocent and virtuous.

2. Religion is the *natural* cauſe of Honour and Reputation, ſo far as ſuch things are capable of any phyſical efficacy. This I ſhall endeavour to prove, both from Reaſon and Experience.

I. By Reaſon. For the better underſtanding of this, we are to take notice, that *Honour* may be conſidered under a twofold notion.

1. According to the deſert and foundation of it, in the perſon *honoured.*

2. According to the acknowledgment or attribution of it, in the perſon *honouring.*

Now Religion doth by a natural cauſality influence both theſe.

1. According to the foundation of it, in the perſon *honoured*, which is true virtue and merit. I have ſhewed before, that the Eſſence of man may be ſaid to conſiſt in being religious, and conſequently this muſt be the rule and meaſure of a mans real worth; it muſt be our excelling in that which makes us men, that muſt make us better men than others. All other things have ſome kind of ſtandard, by which the natural goodneſs of them is to be meaſured; ſo is it with men likewiſe. And this is uſually from their ſuitableneſs to that chief end they are deſigned for. *Quæ conditio rerum, eadem & hominum eſt; navis bona dicitur, non quæ pretioſis coloribus picta eſt*, &c. (ſaith *Seneca*) "We do not therefore eſteem a "*ſhip* to be good, becauſe it is curiouſly "painted and gilded, or carved and in-"lay'd but becauſe 'tis fitted for all the "purpoſes of Navigation, which is the "proper end of a Ship. Nor do we therefore count a Sword to be good, becauſe it hath a rich Hilt and an embroidered Scabbard but becauſe it is fit for the proper uſe of a Sword, which is to cut, *&c.* *In homine quoque nihil ad rem pertinet, quan-*

Epiſt. 76.

quantum aret, quantum fœneret, a quàm multis ſalutetur, ſed quàm bonus ſit. It ſhould be ſo likewiſe in our eſteem of men, who are not ſo much to be valued by the grandeur of their Eſtates or Titles, as by their inward goodneſs. The true ſtamp of Nobility is upon the minds of men, and doth conſiſt in ſuch virtuous habits, as will enable a man for worthy deſigns and actions; when the image of God, who is the rule of excellency and the fountain of honour, is in any meaſure reſtored upon it.

Every man is endowed with a natural principle, inclining him to a ſtate of happineſs, and hath in ſome meaſure both an ability to judg of, and a freedom and liberty for applying himſelf unto, thoſe duties which are the proper means for the promoting of this end: Nor is he upon any other account to be juſtly praiſed or blamed, but according to the right or wrong uſe of this natural liberty. And therefore as ſuch a man doth find either in himſelf or others, a conſtant and firm reſolution to make a right uſe of this, ſo ſhould he proportion his eſteem accordingly, preferring this inward greatneſs, this rectitude of mind, whereby a man is reſolved in every condition, to do that

which ſhall appear to be his duty, before any kind of external greatneſs whatſoever.

There is a reſpect and honour due to all kind of virtues whatſoever, as rendering men amiable and lovely. But amongſt the reſt, there are two, which are by general conſent eſteemed venerable, and ſuch as do greatly advance the reputation of thoſe who are endowed with them; namely,

{ *Wiſdom*,
{ *Courage*.

Becauſe they have a more intrinſick riſe, and do leſs depend upon external advantages, but ſeem rather to be rooted in the inward frame and temper of our minds; and withall are moſt beneficial both to our ſelves and others: The former ſignifying a man to have thoſe *intellectual* abilities which are proper to his kind, whereby the humane nature is to be diſtinguiſhed from other things: The other, becauſe it argues a rectitude in the *will*, and a power to ſubdue the paſſion of fear, which is moſt natural to our preſent ſtate of infirmity; and withall doth ſupport a man againſt difficulties, and enable

able him for those two great services, of *doing* and *suffering* as he ought. And for this reason, the vices that are opposite to these, are amongst all others counted the most shameful; there being no greater reproach to be cast upon any one, than to be esteemed a Fool or a Coward.

Now a man that is irreligious cannot justly pretend to either of these virtues.

1. For *Wisdom*. This is so essential to Religion, that in the Scripture-phrase they both go under the same *name*. And there is very good reason, why it should be so; because there is such an intimate agreement between the *natures* of them. The *Philosopher* doth define Wisdom to consist in an ability and inclination, to make choice of right *means* in the prosecution of our true *end*. And nothing can enable a man for this but Religion, both as to the *subordinate* end of *temporal* happiness in this world, and chiefly with respect to that great and *supreme* end of *eternal* happiness in the world to come.

2. And then for *Courage*. 'Tis not possible for a man to be truly valiant, unless he be withall truly religious: He may be bold and daring, and able in a fearless manner to rush upon any danger; but then he must stifle his reason from consi-

dering

dering what the conſequences of things may be, what ſhall become of him hereafter, if he ſhould miſcarry: There being no man whatſoever ſo totally free from the apprehenſions of a future ſtate, but that when he is ſerious and conſiderate, he muſt be ſtartled with doubts and fears concerning it: So that there cannot be any rational, ſedate, deliberate courage, but only in ſuch as have good hopes of a better eſtate in the other world; And 'tis Religion only that can enable a man for this.

2. Honour conſidered, according to the acknowledgment or attribution of it in the perſons *Honouring*; which is the external form, or as the body of honour, being much in the power of others. And this may be diſtinguiſhed into theſe two kinds,

{ *Inward*,
{ *Outward*.

1. *Inward*, Honouring is properly an act of the underſtanding, in paſſing judgment upon the nature of things: When we do in our minds, own and acknowledg the real worth or virtue of a thing or perſon. And every one who will

will act rationally, not miſcalling good evil, and evil good, muſt proportion his eſteem of things, according to the real value of them. Nor is it in any mans power, ſo far to offer violence to his own faculties, as to believe any thing againſt evidence; to eſteem that man to be either worthy or unworthy, whom he knows to be otherwiſe. He may call him and uſe him as he pleaſes, and he may be willing to entertain prejudices, either for or againſt him; And in this ſenſe, *Honor eſt in honorante*: But he cannot inwardly think or believe otherwiſe than according to his evidence. For men of no real worth to expect this inward honour from others, as it is very *unequal*, *requiring brick without ſtraw*; and very *unlawful*, It being as well a mans duty *to contemn a vile perſon*, *as to honour thoſe that fear the Lord*; ſo neither is it *poſſible*, becauſe men muſt neceſſarily judge according to the moſt prevailing evidence; nor can they eſteem ſuch a one to be worthy whom they know to be otherwiſe, any more than they can believe that to be white and ſtreight which they ſee to be black and crooked.

There

There are indeed ſome other things that do commonly go under this name, as the ſeveral degrees of Nobility, Titles, and Places of dignity, which are uſually called by this name of honour; but theſe things (as they are abſtracted from Magiſtracy) being wholly extrinſecal, have no more due to them, but a mere external reſpect: They may challenge from us that we ſhould give them their due Titles, and demean our ſelves towards them with that obſervance and ceremony which becomes their quality: But then as for that inward eſteem and valuation of our minds belonging to good men; ſuch perſons can challenge no greater ſhare of this, than according as their real merit and virtue ſhall require. The Royal ſtamp upon any kind of Metal may be ſufficient to give it an extrinſick value, and to determine the rate at which it is to paſs amongſt Coyns; but it cannot give an intrinſick value, or make that which is but Braſs to be Gold.

'Tis true indeed there are ſome Callings and particular Relations of men, to which an inward veneration is due, though the perſons themſelves ſhould not be virtuous; namely *Magiſtrates*, and *Miniſters*, and *Parents*, and *Benefactors*; who

who having ſomewhat of a Divine ſtamp and impreſs, may therefore challenge from us, that we ſhould demean our ſelves towards them, both with ſuch an *outward* reſpect as becomes their *places*, and with ſuch an *inward* reſpect too, as may be ſuitable to that *image* which they bear; to our *dependance* upon them, and *obligations* to them. But then we cannot be obliged to think ſuch perſons good men, unleſs we have ſome evidence to believe them to be ſo, or at leaſt, not to be otherwiſe; ſo that they are beholding to ſomething extrinſecal to their perſons, namely to their Callings and Relations, for that honour which is paid to them.

2. *Outward* Honouring is, when men do by their words or actions teſtify that eſteem and reſpect which they have for the worth of others. And this indeed may be truely ſaid to be in the power of others, becauſe men have a greater command over their words and actions, than they have over their belief. Now all men that are truely virtuous and religious, will be ready to give unto every one his due honour; and ſuch are the beſt judges of it. Upon which account *Tully* defines true honour to be *conſen-* *Tuſc. Q. 2.*

tiens

tiens laus bonorum, the concurrent approbation of good men; ſuch only being fit to give true praiſe, who are themſelves praiſe-worthy.

As for vitious and irreligious perſons, 'tis not to be expected that they ſhould be forward to commend that which is oppoſite to them. But then 'tis to be conſidered, that theſe are no competent judges of ſuch matters: And for a man to reſent deeply the contempt of unworthy perſons, were overmuch to honour them, as if their eſteem could add any thing to his reputation.

And yet, even theſe perſons cannot avoid having an inward veneration for goodneſs and religion, which is the reaſon why they are ſo forward to diſſemble it, to diſguiſe themſelves under the ſhew of it. Men do not uſe to counterfeit common ſtones and metals, but ſuch as are precious, Jewels and Gold; Nor would any one take the pains to counterfeit being Religious, if he did not think it a matter of ſome value, and a means to procure eſteem from others. And when ſuch men do revile and perſecute any one for being religious, yet is there ſuch a natural veneration belonging to the thing it ſelf, as makes them

to

to diſguiſe it under the name of Hypocriſy, Hereſy, Superſtition, *&c.* whereby they may juſtify themſelves in their oppoſing of it.

II. But this is only general diſcourſe, and in the notion. The beſt argument to this purpoſe would be from *Experience*; by which I mean that practical knowledg, which every man may attain by his own obſervation of the uſual courſe of things in the world. And by this it will appear, that no kind of perſons have been more highly reverenced in the hearts and conſciences of others, than thoſe that have been moſt eminent for their virtue and religion; which hath been always true, both with reſpect to publick communities, and private perſons.

1. For *Nations.* If we conſult the Hiſtories of former times, we ſhall find that ſaying of *Solomon* conſtantly verifyed, That *Righteouſneſs doth exalt a nation, but ſin doth prove a reproach to it.* Prov. 14. 34. And more eſpecially the ſin of Irreligiouſneſs and Prophaneneſs; As this doth increaſe in any nation, ſo muſt the honour and Reputation of that nation decreaſe. The *Roman* Empire was then at the higheſt, as to its name and greatneſs, when

when it was ſo as to its virtue; when they were moſt punctual in obſerving the Rites of their Religion (though that were a falſe way of worſhip) moſt Heroical in their Juſtice, courage, fidelity, gratitude; then it was that they deſerved to govern the world, and to be had in greateſt honour above all other nations. And not only *Cicero*, and *Polybius*, two Heathen Writers, who, upon that account, might be thought more partial; But St. *Auſtin* alſo and *Lactantius*, two of the *Fathers*, do aſcribe the flouriſhing of that Empire, when it was at its height, to the Religion and Piety and virtue of thoſe times; and as they did afterwards degenerate from this, ſo did they decline likewiſe in their greatneſs and honour.

2. Thus alſo hath it been with *particular perſons*; Amongſt the *Heathen*, what Elogies do we find in the honour of *Socrates*, *Ariſtides*, *Cato*, *Epictetus*? The laſt of whom, though but a poor ſlave, had yet ſuch a veneration paid to his memory, that his earthen lamp by which he was wont to ſtudy, was, after his death, ſold for Three thouſand Drachms.

Nor

Nor was it otherwiſe amongſt the *Chriſtians*; The *Apoſtles* were but poor Fiſhermen, illiterate Mechanicks; many of the *Martyrs* were but of mean condition, much oppoſed and perſecuted in the world; and yet theſe men, during the time of their lives, were highly reverenced amongſt thoſe that knew them; and ſince their deaths, what can be more glorious than that renown which they have amongſt men, when the greateſt Kings and Princes will not mention their names without reverence, when whole Nations are willing to ſet apart, and to obſerve ſolemn days and Feſtivals in honour of their memories?

And as it hath always been thus formerly, ſo I appeal to every man's breaſt, whether it be not ſo now. Let them but examine what their inclinations are towards ſuch perſons whom they believe to be truly virtuous; not only to ſuch among them, as are their particular acquaintance and friends; but likewiſe to ſtrangers, nay to very enemies, whether they do not eſteem and love them and will-well to them.

It cannot be denyed, but that there are too many in the world, who propoſe to themſelves ſuch ways and courſes for

the promoting of their *honour* and reputation, as are quite oppoſite to that which I have now been diſcourſing of; namely, prophaneneſs and contempt of Religion, deſpiſing that which other men ſtand in awe of; by which they think to get the reputation of *Wit* and *Courage*; of *Wit*, by pretending to penetrate more deeply into the nature of things, and to underſtand them better than others do; not to be ſo eaſily impoſed upon, as other credulous people are: Of *Courage*, by not being ſo eaſily ſcared at the apprehenſion of danger at a diſtance.

But the plain truth is, ſuch perſons do hereby prove themſelves to be both *Fools* and *Cowards*.

Fools; In miſtaking their great intereſt, in making choice of ſuch means, as can never promote the end they deſign. There being no kind of men that are more expoſed (whatſoever they themſelves may think of it) than thoſe that ſeek for credit by deſpiſing of Religion. *Fools*, in venturing their *future eſtates* and their *ſouls* upon ſuch hazards, as all mankind would cry-out-upon, for the moſt palpable folly and madneſs, if they ſhould do the like towards their *Temporal eſtates*, or their Bodies.

Cow-

Cowards; In being more afraid of little dangers, becauſe they are *preſent*, than of greater, becauſe they are *future*, and at a diſtance. As that Souldier, who doth more dread the preſent danger of fighting, when he is obliged to it, than the future danger of ſuffering by *Martial* law for running away, may juſtly be eſteemed a notorious coward; ſo may that man, who is more afraid of a *preſent* inconvenience, by incurring the prejudice and diſpleaſure of his looſe companions, to whom he would be acceptable, than of a *future* miſchief from the judgment of God. No man will eſteem another to be truely valiant, becauſe he is not afraid to do ſuch vile unworthy things as will expoſe him to the diſpleaſure and puniſhment of the Civil Magiſtrate; much leſs ſhould he be ſo accounted, for daring to do ſuch things, as will in the iſſue expoſe him to the Divine vengeance.

CHAP. VII.

How Religion conduceth to the happineſs of the Inward man, *as it tends to the* regulating of our faculties, *and to* the peace and tranquillity of our minds.

AS for the *Internal* well-fare of our minds, this (as I obſerved before) doth depend upon theſe two things.

1. The perfecting and regulating of our faculties, inabling them for their proper functions, and the keeping of them in due ſubordination to one another.

2. In the peace, quiet, contentment conſequent thereupon.

And both theſe do likewiſe depend upon Religion.

1. For the perfecting and regulating of our faculties, and inabling them for their proper functions. Theſe things do depend upon Religion, both

{ *Morally*, / *Naturally*.

1. *Mo-*

1. *Morally*; as theſe things are bleſſings and priviledges, ſo do they belong to Religion as the proper reward of it. Thoſe men only being fit to have free and large minds, and refined faculties, who are willing to improve them to the beſt uſe and advantage. To this purpoſe there are ſeveral expreſſions in *Scripture*: *A good underſtanding have all they that do his commandments. Thou through thy commandments haſt made me wiſer than mine enemies. He that doth the will of God ſhall know it.*

2. *Naturally*, as theſe things are *duties*, ſo are they the proper effects of virtue.

The generality of the *Heathen* Philoſophers have agreed in this, that ſin is the natural cauſe of debaſing the ſoul, immerſing it into a ſtate of ſenſuality and darkneſs, deriving ſuch an impotence and deformity upon the mind, as the moſt loathſome diſeaſes do upon the body. And therefore it muſt be Religion and virtue, on the other ſide, that muſt enlighten and enlarge the mind, and reſtore it from the degeneracy of its lapſed eſtate, renewing upon us the image of our Maker, adorning us with thoſe beauties of holineſs, which belong to *the hidden man of the heart*. 'Tis the proper work of

Religion, to frame the mind to the nearest conformity unto the nature of God; upon which account it is said in Scripture to consist in *a participation of the Divine nature*. Other things may be said to have some remote resemblance to the Deity; but man only amongst the visible creatures, is capable of those more immediate communications from him, by Religion: And all kind of perfection is to be measured by its nearness or remoteness to the first and chief pattern of all perfection.

2 Pet. 1.

As all kind of vice doth go under the name of *impotence*, so Religion is described to be *the spirit of power, and of a sound mind*. Because it doth establish in a man a just empire over himself, over all those blind powers and passions which of themselves are apt to raise tumults and commotions against the dominion of Reason. That which health is to the body, whereby the outward senses are enabled to make a true judgment of things, that is virtue to the mind, whereby the inward faculties must be fitted and disposed to discern betwixt things that differ, which those who are under the power of vicious habits are not able to do.

But

But to ſpeak more particularly, Religion doth,

1. *Enlarge the underſtanding*, enabling it to ſee beyond the narrow bounds of ſenſe and time, to behold things that are inviſible; God being in the intellectual world, as the Sun is in the ſenſible world; and as natural blindneſs doth diſable men from ſeeing the one, ſo will ſpiritual blindneſs for the other.

2. It doth *exalt and regulate the will*, to a deſire after, and acquieſcence in ſuch things as will promote the perfection of our natures, and conſequently will beget in the mind, the trueſt liberty, ingenuity, generoſity, which are altogether inconſiſtent with the ſervitude of luſts and paſſions.

3. It doth *reduce the paſſions*, unto a due ſubordination to the ſuperior faculties; reſtraining the violence and impetuouſneſs of them, from whence the greateſt part of the trouble and diſquiet of mens lives doth proceed. As he that is of a healthy conſtitution, can endure heat and cold and labour with little or no prejudice to himſelf; ſo can one of a virtuous mind undergo various conditions without receiving any hurt from them. Such an one is not lifted up by proſperi-

ty, nor dejected by adverſity: He is not a ſervant to anger, fear, envy, malice, which are the great occaſions of diſturbing our inward peace and quiet.

2. The ſecond thing wherein the welfare of our minds doth conſiſt, is peace, tranquillity, joy, confidence, in oppoſition to inward diſquiet, anxiety, grief, fear, diffidence. And theſe do depend upon Religion likewiſe, both

{ *Morally*,
{ *Naturally*.

1. *Morally*, as theſe things may be conſidered under the notion of bleſſings and priviledges, ſo they belong to the rewards of Religion. All *Philoſophers* having agreed in this, that inward ſerenity and compoſedneſs of mind is the proper reward of moral virtue.

To which the Scripture doth atteſt, in thoſe expreſſions where 'tis ſaid, that *a good man is ſatisfied from himſelf*; in *the fear of the Lord is ſtrong confidence. The righteous is bold as a Lion. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee.* That *the fruits of righteouſneſs ſhall be peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs, quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.*

Prov. 14. 14. v. 26. c. 28. 1. Iſa. 26. 3. Iſa. 32. 17.

That

That *tribulation and anguiſh ſhall be upon every ſoul that doth evil; but to him that doth good, glory and honour and peace,* ſerenity and compoſedneſs of mind, *peace that paſſeth all underſtanding, joy that is unſpeakable and full of glory.* Rom. 2. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 22.

2. *Naturally*; as theſe things are conſidered under the notion of *duties*, ſo they are the moſt genuine fruits and effects of Religion; which doth *oblige* us to them, and enable us for them.

1. Religion doth oblige men to joy and peace and confidence. The very *Heathens* have acknowledged theſe to be ſuch things, as all good men are bound to upon the account of duty. And the Scripture doth abound in precepts to this purpoſe. *Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I ſay rejoice. Commit thy ways unto the Lord, and he ſhall bring it to paſs. Be careful for nothing. Caſt thy burden upon him, as knowing that he takes care for thee.*

Theſe kind of duties do formally and in the very eſſence of them, contain in them the nature of happineſs.

And on the contrary, the oppoſite vices do contain in them the true nature of puniſhment, and render men formally miſerable. Such a man muſt needs be unhappy,

happy, who lives under the power of continual anxieties, ſorrow, fears, diffidence, ſelfwill, malice, envy, *&c.* of ſeveral of which, that may be ſaid which the Poet ſpeaks concerning one of them.

Invidiâ Siculi non invenêre Tyranni
Tormentum majus.

The *Sicilian* Tyrants, who were of old famous for inventing engines of Torture, as that of *Phalaris* his Bull, were not able to find out any kind of Torment for the body, equal to that which ſome of theſe vices do occaſion to the mind.

2. And as Religion doth oblige us to, ſo likewiſe doth it enable us for this kind of happineſs, and that upon a twofold account.

1. From the general nature of Religion and Virtue conſidered in it ſelf.

2. From the moſt natural effects and conſequences of it.

1. From the general nature of Religion conſidered in it ſelf. All kind of vertues containing in their very eſſence, theſe kind of inward felicities, either Formally or Virtually: The very foundation of

of happineſs and miſery, reward and puniſhment, being laid in the very nature of theſe things themſelves. That natural appetite, whereby men are carried out after a ſtate of happineſs, is for the nature of it ſo univerſal and radical, ſo cloſely fixed to our firſt principles; and for the degree of it ſo ardent and impetuous, that 'tis not poſſible for men to be diſappointed in it, without a very quick ſenſation, and ſome proportionable trouble for it. The more eager men are in their deſires, the more ſenſible muſt they be of gain or loſs. Now all ſuch courſes as have a natural tendency to the ſatisfying of this appetite, are upon that account parts of our happineſs. And on the other ſide, thoſe which are croſs to it, muſt needs make us miſerable. And if it be ſo (as I have already proved) that our happineſs muſt conſiſt in ſuch a ſimilitude and reſemblance to the ſupreme good as we are capable of; it muſt hence follow, that Religion is formally happineſs. He that lives under the power of Godlike diſpoſitions in his mind, and doth accordingly exerciſe them in the courſe of his life, may be ſaid *eo nomine* to be a happy man: Holineſs and Happineſs being but

two

two diſtinct names for the ſame thing. I ſhewed before that the true nature of pleaſure was founded in a ſuitableneſs betwixt the faculty and the object: From whence it will follow, that reaſonable actions have in them a ſuitableneſs to reaſonable minds; And the more virtuous and religious any man is, the more delight muſt ſuch a man take in ſuch kind of actions. That man who hath a juſt ſenſe of his own impotent dependent condition, and how much it is for the intereſt of the world, and the good of all humane affairs, that there is a ſupreme Governour, who is infinitely wiſe, and powerful, and gracious, and how reaſonable it is that men ſhould demean themſelves towards him ſuitably to this belief: He that is convinced how neceſſary it is for the promoting his own private, as well as the publick wellfare, that men be forward to do all good offices of juſtice and friendſhip towards one another: I ſay, he that is under this conviction, muſt needs find much ſatisfaction and pleaſure in ſuch kind of actions. As for *firſt Table* duties which conſiſt in acquaintance with God, communion with him, in meditating upon his wiſdom, goodneſs, power, in affiance, love, reverence;

rence; if these were not acts of the highest pleasure, they would never have been appointed for the happiness of our future state in heaven. And as for *second Table* duties, what greater pleasure and satisfaction can there be to a generous mind, than to do worthy things, to be employed about acts of justice and charity and beneficence, to promote publick peace and good-will amongst men? Eating and drinking is not a more proper satisfaction to those natural appetites of hunger and thirst, than the doing of good is to the rational inclinations of a good man. As all light, and love, and joy are from above, from the father of lights; so all darkness, sorrow, fear, disquiet, must be from below, from the Prince of darkness. Wicked men are well compared to the troubled sea, which cannot rest, but by reason of its being tossed to and fro by contrary winds, is still casting up mire and dirt. He that lives under the servitude of lusts and passions, must always be in an unquiet restless condition; because such masters can never be satisfied in any one service they employ us about; besides the interfering and contrariety of those employments which they will exact from us. Vice is multiform, *scelera dissident*, Isa. 57.

dent, and therefore must they needs be inconsistent with rest and quiet. One principal requisite to a state of serenity of mind, doth consist in an uniform agreement about that chief end which we are to pursue, together with the means conducing to it; whereas they that have many and contrary things in design, must needs be distracted about them. The soul that cannot fix it self upon the enjoyment of God, who is the only all-sufficient Good, and consequently the only center of Rest, must be like those disconsolate spirits, Mat. 12. which our Saviour speaks of, who being cast out of their habitations, were put to wander up and down through desart places, seeking rest, but finding none.

2. From the most natural effects and consequences of Religion, in respect of that inward confidence, peace, joy, which must follow the conscience of well-doing; insomuch, that there is not any kind of tree which doth more naturally produce its proper fruits, than the habits of virtue do bring forth joy and serenity in the mind. When a man shall sit down and take a serious review of what he hath done, and finds it to be most agreeable both to his duty and interest, from hence there must needs arise an inward satisfaction of mind.

mind. And on the other ſide, a fountain doth not more naturally ſend out waters, than vice doth puniſhment and miſery. Nor is this any meer notion or fancy, which ſome ſevere melancholy Divines would impoſe upon the world; but it is moſt agreeable to thoſe natural ſentiments which the very *Heathen* have had and do frequently mention: *Seneca* in particular; *Res ſevera eſt verum gaudium; unde ſit, interrogas? dicam, ex bona conſcientia, ex honeſtis conciliis, ex rectis actionibus.* All ſolid comfort muſt ariſe from a good conſcience, and honeſt actions.

I appeal to the experience of all conſidering men, whether this doth not appear to them, that the generality of thoſe who live moſt pleaſantly in the world, are the moſt religious and virtuous part of mankind; ſuch as know how to regulate themſelves in the fruition of what they have, how to avoid the extremities on either hand, to prevent thoſe mixtures of guilt and fear, which are apt to ſowre and imbitter all our enjoyments? Whether lawful pleaſures, which a man may reflect upon without any ſenſe of guilt, be not much to be preferred before others? Whether thoſe intellectual delights

that

that flow from the conſcience of well-doing, be not much better than any ſinful ſenſual pleaſure? Whether the doing of any worthy action, ſuch as all good men muſt think well of and commend, do not afford a more ſolid laſting pleaſure than can be had from any ſenſible enjoyments? Whether any thing can be more ſuitable, and conſequently delightful to a generous mind, than an opportunity of being grateful to thoſe by whom a man hath been obliged; the making of an ample return for the favours he hath received? Whether that noble way of conqueſt, *overcoming evil with good*, ſurprizing an enemy by kindneſs, when we have it in our power to be ſevere towards him, be not a far greater pleaſure than that which is by ſome counted the ſweeteſt of all other things, *Revenge?*

Religion doth likewiſe advance the ſoul to an holy confidence, concerning the Divine favour and good-will towards us. *If our hearts condemn us not, we have confidence towards God.* A good conſcience will ſet us above all thoſe fears and doubts and cares, whereby the lives of men are rendered uncomfortable. When in decrepit age a man cannot find comfort in other things, *when the grinders ſhall be*

be few, and appetite ceaſe, then will this be *a continual feaſt*. The moſt rational, ſolid, ſublime, complete, durable delights, of all others, do flow from the conſcience of well-doing. 'Tis a chief part this, of that heaven which we enjoy upon earth, and 'tis likewiſe a principal part of that happineſs which we hope to enjoy in heaven. Next to the beatifical viſion and fruition of God, is the happineſs of a good conſcience, and next to that the ſociety of Saints and Angels.

Whereas on the other ſide, he that lives under the ſenſe of guilt, and a conſciouſneſs of his obligation to puniſhment, muſt needs be deſtitute of all inward peace and comfort: Such an one can have nothing to ſupport him, with patience, under a ſtate of affliction in this world, nor can he have any rational grounds to expect a better condition hereafter; and therefore muſt needs have very dreadful apprehenſions of dying, and *be all his life time ſubject to bondage through the fear of death*. And that man muſt needs be very miſerable, who can neither have true *joy in life*, nor any *hope in death*.

This the *Heathen* Philoſophers have acknowledged, That there is always a ſecret dread which doth accompany guilt.

So *Seneca* in particular, ſpeaking of wicked men, he ſaith, *tantùm metuunt quantùm nocent*, that ſuch men muſt have fears proportionable to their guilt. And a little after, *dat pœnas quiſquis expectat, quiſquis autem meruit expectat*; thoſe men do really ſuffer puniſhment, who live under the expectation of it, and whoever doth any thing to deſerve it muſt needs expect it. 'Tis not eaſie to expreſs the torment which thoſe men undergo,

Ep. 105.

——quos diri conſcia facti
Mens habet attonitos, & ſurdo verbere cædit,
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum.
——Mens ſibi conſcia facti
Præmetuens, adhibet ſtimulos, terretque flagellis.

'Tis the unſupportableneſs of this, that many times doth cauſe men in the bitterneſs of their ſouls, to chuſe ſtrangling and death rather than life. The *Heathens* do ſet forth ſuch a mans condition, by the fiction of *Furies* continually haunting and ſcourging him: But *Zophar* doth better deſcribe it, where he ſaith, *Terrors are upon him, all darkneſs is hid in his ſecret places, a fire not blown ſhall conſume him.*

Job 20. 25, 26.

Though

Though ſome men are ſo hardened againſt the ſenſe of guilt, as to go on in their ſinful courſes, without feeling any of this remorſe for them; yet is their peace ſo far from being a priviledg, that it doth render their condition more deſperate, becauſe it ſuppoſes them to have a *reprobate mind*, and ſuch a ſtupidity upon their conſciences, as makes them *paſt feeling*, being *ſeared as it were with an hot iron*. Which though it may preſerve them from thoſe preſent laſhes which others are tormented with, yet doth it argue their conditions to be more remedileſs and deſperate. All the difference is, the one is ſick of a *Calenture* or *burning Feaver*, the other of a *Lethargy* or *Apoplexy*; the former more painful for the preſent, but both of them very dangerous, only the latter leſs capable of remedy than the former.

Rom. 1. 28 Eph. 4. 18, 19. 1 Tim. 4. 2.

CHAP. VIII.

How Religion conduces to our Happineſs in the next world.

AS Religion is the true cauſe of our *preſent* happineſs in this world, whether

{ *External*,
{ *Internal*.

So likewiſe is it the cauſe of that happineſs, which we expect in our *future ſtates*: Which muſt depend upon ſuch courſes, as can give us the moſt rational aſſurance of bleſſedneſs and glory hereafter.

I ſhall ſpeak but briefly to this ſubject, becauſe 'tis ſcarce poſſible for any man to be ſo ſtrangely infatuated, ſo wholly loſt to common Reaſon as to believe, that vicious courſes, deſpiſing of Religion, walking contrary to God, can be the means to entitle him to this future happineſs, any more than contempt and hatred of any one, is a proper means to procure his favour. What

What kind of Happineſs this is, which belongs to our future ſtate, and wherein the Glory of it doth conſiſt, is ἄῤῥητον τι, a thing unſpeakable, altogether above the expreſſions of humane Orators, and paſſeth all knowledg, the heart of man being not able to conceive it: Nor can it be expected that we ſhould be able, in this ſtate of fleſh and mortality, to comprehend what kind of irradiations, glorified ſouls are capable of. Only in the general, 'tis ſaid, *we ſhall be like God*, and *ſee him as he is*.

This ſtate of future happineſs, as it is above all other things of greateſt moment, ſo ought it to be proportionably laboured after, with the greateſt care and diligence.

There are ſeveral varieties of metaphorical names or expreſſions whereby this ſtate is deſcribed in Scripture, but all of them do imply ſomething of more than ordinary care and induſtry to the qualifying of men for it, as *Bellarmine* hath obſerved in his Tract *de Æternâ felicitate ſanctorum*. *Lib. 5. c. 9.*

'Tis ſtyled,

The *City of God*, *The heavenly Jeruſalem*. And it requires ſome care and diligence for one that is a Citizen of this

Ephes. 2. world, to be *a fellow-citizen with the ſaints*; it being no eaſie thing for one that lives in this world, not to be of it.

Matt. 7. *The Houſe of God*, where there *are many manſions*; But *ſtreight is the gate*, and *narrow is the way to it.*

Matt. 13. An *hid Treaſure*, a *pretious Pearl.* Not to be obtained without putting ſuch a value upon it, as will make a man ready to part with all that he hath, for the purchaſe of it.

Matt. 20. A *penny.* The wages of our daily ſervice, not to be given but to ſuch as *labour in the vineyard*, and hold out to the end.

Luke. 14. A *Feaſt* or rich *ſupper*; which they are altogether unworthy of and unfit for, who do wholly devote themſelves to the affairs of this world.

Matt. 25. The *Joy of our Lord* and *Maſter*; which they only are admitted to, who are careful to improve the *Talents* they are intruſted withal.

Matt. 25. The ſolemnity of a *royal wedding*; from which all lazy, ſlothful people, who have not *oyl in their lamps*, and do not watch for the *coming of the Bridegroom*, ſhall be ſhut out and excluded into outter darkneſs.

'Tis

'Tis a *Prize*; which they only obtain who accompliſh their race, and run to the goal. 1 Cor. 9.

'Tis a *Crown*; which is due only to ſuch as fight valiantly and overcome. 1 Cor. 9.

'Tis an *Inheritance*; and therefore belongs only to ſons. 'Tis an *Inheritance of the ſaints*; and therefore unſanctified perſons can have nothing to do with it. 'Tis *an inheritance of the ſaints in light*; and therefore cannot belong to ſuch as ſtill remain under the powers of darkneſs.

Heaven may be conſidered under a twofold notion, either as a

{ *State*, / *Place*.

1. In the firſt ſenſe, 'tis the ſame with Holineſs, conſiſting in ſuch Godlike diſpoſitions, as may make us partakers of the Divine nature.

2. In the ſecond ſenſe, It denotes that other world, where we hope to enjoy the beatifical viſion, in the bleſſed ſociety of Saints and Angels. Which Religion only and Holineſs can qualify us for, by working in our natures ſuch a ſuitableneſs and congruity as muſt make

ſuch things to be felicities.

In brief; That Salvation and Glory, which the Chriſtian Religion doth ſo clearly propoſe to us, is, as to the nature and eſſence of it, but the very ſame thing with Religion; conſiſting in ſuch a conformity of our minds to the nature of God, whereby we are made capable of the fruition of him in Heaven. So that in this reſpect alſo, Religion is the *Whole of Man*, that is, the whole Happineſs and well-being of man doth depend upon it.

I have now diſpatcht what I intended in this Diſcourſe, namely to prove the Reaſonableneſs and Credibility of the Principles of Natural Religion; which I have made appear to be in themſelves of ſo great evidence, that every one, who will not do violence to his own faculties, muſt believe and aſſent unto them. I have likewiſe made it plain, that 'tis every mans greateſt Intereſt, to provide for his preſent and future happineſs, by applying himſelf to the Duties of Religion, which upon all accounts will advance the perfection of his nature and promote his true wellfare, both in this world and the other. Inſomuch that if we were to chuſe the Laws we would ſubmit unto,

it

it were not poſſible for us to contrive any rules more advantageous to our own intereſt, than thoſe which Religion doth propoſe, and require us to obſerve, upon pain of everlaſting damnation, and *in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lye hath promiſed*, to all thoſe *who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory and honour and immortality.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The Concluſion of the whole, ſhewing the excellency of the Chriſtian Religion, *and the advantages of it, both as to the* knowledg *and* practice *of our duty, above the meer* light of Nature.

I Have now at large conſidered the Credibility of the *Principles* of *Natural Religion*, and our obligation to the ſeveral *Duties* reſulting from thoſe *Principles*. The purpoſe of all which is to ſhew how firm and deep a foundation Religion hath in the Nature and Reaſon of Mankind: But not in the leaſt to derogate from the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of *Divine Revelation*, or to extenuate the great bleſſing and benefit of the *Chriſtian Religion*; but rather to prepare and make way for the entertainment of that *Doctrine* which is ſo agreeable to the cleareſt dictates of Natural light. For notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid of *Natural Religion*, it cannot be denyed, but that in this

this dark and degenerate ſtate into which Mankind is ſunk, there is great want of a clearer light to diſcover our duty to us with greater certainty, and to put it beyond all doubt and diſpute what is the good and acceptable Will of God; and of a more powerful encouragement to the practice of our duty, by the promiſe of a ſupernatural aſſiſtance, and by the aſſurance of a great and eternal reward. And all theſe defects are fully ſupplied, by that clear and perfect *Revelation* which God hath made to the World by our bleſſed *Saviour*. And although, before God was pleaſed to make this Revelation of his Will to mankind, men were obliged to the practice of *moral duties* by the *Law of Nature*, and as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, *having not the Law were a Law to themſelves, ſhewing the effect of the Law written upon their hearts*; yet now that God hath in ſo much mercy revealed his Will ſo plainly to mankind, it is not enough for us who enjoy this *Revelation*, to perform thoſe moral duties which are of natural obligation, unleſs we alſo do them in obedience to *Chriſt* as our Lord and Lawgiver. As we are *Chriſtians*, *whatever we do in word or deed, we muſt do all in the name of the Lord Jeſus*; and by him alone

Rom. 2. 14, 15.

Col. 3. 17.

alone expect to find acceptance with God.

How far the Moral virtues of meer *Heathens*, who walk anſwerable to the light they have, may be approved of God, I ſhall not now diſpute. Only thus much ſeems clear in the general, That the Law of Nature being implanted in the hearts of men by God himſelf, muſt therefore be eſteemed to be as much his Law, as any poſitive Inſtitution whatſoever: And conſequently, conformity to it muſt in its kind, *in genere morum*, be acceptable to him. God loves the ſocieties of mankind, and becauſe of the neceſſity of juſtice, and virtue, and probity to the preſervation of humane ſociety, therefore he doth generally give a bleſſing and ſucceſs to honeſt and good enterprizes, and blaſts the contrary with ſignal judgments and marks of his diſpleaſure. But we cannot from theſe outward diſpenſations infer any thing certainly concerning ſuch mens eternal conditions.

Some of the *Fathers* indeed, as *Juſtin Martyr*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Chryſoſtom*, have delivered their judgments for the ſalvation of ſuch *Heathens* as live according to the light of Nature: But the general ſtream of the reſt is for the contrary opinion.

opinion. I ſhall not now enquire into the particular grounds and reaſons of this difference. It may ſuffice to ſay in general, that the *goodneſs* and *mercy* of God, as well as *his judgments are a great deep*; that *he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy*; and that when God hath not thought fit to tell *us* how he will be pleaſed to deal with ſuch perſons, it is not fit for us to tell *Him* how he ought to deal with them. Only of this we are ſufficiently aſſured, that in all ages and places of the world, all that are ſaved are ſaved by the mercy of God, and by the merits of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world; the *Scripture* having expreſly told us, that *there is no ſalvation in any other*; *for there is none other Name under heaven given among men whereby we muſt be ſaved.* To be ſure, there is no reaſon for any man, who lives under the diſpenſation of the Goſpel, to expect that he *ſhall eſcape*, if he *neglect ſo great ſalvation.* This is the tenour of that Doctrine of the Goſpel, which *Chriſt* immediately upon his reſurrection doth commiſſionate his Diſciples to preach; *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* And *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that believeth not,*

not, is condemned already. And presently it follows, *This is the condemnation*, &c. And again *Joh.* 7. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ.*

Now that to *us*, to whom the Christian Doctrine is revealed and proposed, the belief and practice of it is the only way wherein we can hope to be accepted, I shall endeavour to make out by these two arguments:

1. From the Evidence we have of its Divine Authority.

2. From the Excellency of the things contained in it; which are the two chief grounds of our obligation to it.

1. From that *Evidence* which we have for the Divine authority of this Doctrine, above any other. It seems to be a Principle of Nature, to which all Nations have consented, That God himself should prescribe the way of his own worship. All kind of inventions whatsoever, that have been any way useful to humane life, especially such kind of Laws as concern Civil or Ecclesiastical associations of men, have upon the first discovery of them been still ascribed to the *Deity*. As if the *Authors* of them must needs have been first illuminated with some ray of Divinity. Nor

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is it probable, that ever any Nation ſhould, with any degree of zeal, embrace the reſpective Ceremonies of their Religion, unleſs they had firſt eſteemed them to have proceeded from Divine Revelation.

Upon this account was it that *Lycurgus*, and *Numa Pompilius*, and *Mahomet*, and the reſt of thoſe kind of Founders of Nations and Religions, when they would obtain a reverence and devotion to the things they were to eſtabliſh, they were fain to pretend at leaſt to Divine Revelation. Which proceeding of theirs, though it did really abuſe the people with groſs deluſions, yet was it founded upon this common Principle, that none can think aright of God, much leſs ſerve him in an acceptable manner, unleſs they are firſt inſtructed by him in the true way of doing it.

Now that the Doctrine of Chriſtianity is thus derived to us by Divine Inſtitution, we have as clear and convincing evidence, as things of that nature are capable of.

As for the *Old Teſtament*, that hath by the general conſent of learned men, all the marks of pureſt Antiquity; there being nothing in the world which in this reſpect

reſpect is equal to it, or which may pretend to be compared with it. All other the moſt ancient monuments of Antiquity coming ſhort of it by many Ages. It was written in the firſt and moſt ancient Language; from which the very Alphabets and Letters of all other Languages (in the opinion of the moſt learned *Heathen*, *Plutarch*, *Pliny*, *Tacitus*, *Lucan*, &c.) were derived. The very number and order of Letters moſt generally uſed in all kind of *Alphabets*, being very improper and unnatural; which it is not likely men of ſeveral nations would have all agreed upon, were it not barely upon this reaſon, that they were taken up by imitation, and ſo did retain the errors and imperfections of that firſt original from whence they were derived.

This Book contains as the moſt ancient, ſo the moſt exact ſtory of the world, The propagation of men, and the diſperſing of families into the ſeveral parts of the earth; as I ſhewed before.

And though this Book were written in ſeveral ages and places, by ſeveral perſons; yet doth the Doctrine of it accord together, with a moſt excellent harmony, without any diſſonance or inconſiſtency.

And

And for the manner of delivering the things contained in it, 'tis ſo ſolemn, reverend and majeſtick, ſo exactly ſuited to the nature of things, as may juſtly provoke our wonder and acknowledgment of its Divine original. Inſomuch that *Longinus*, a great maſter of eloquence amongſt the *Heathens*, hath obſerved the *decorum* and majeſty which *Moſes* uſeth in deſcribing the Creation, in thoſe words, *God ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was Light.*

And as for the *New Teſtament.* Thoſe various correſpondencies, which it bears to the chief things of the Old Teſtament, may ſufficiently evidence that mutual relation, dependance and affinity which there is betwixt them. That in ſuch an Age there was ſuch a man as *Chriſt*, who preached ſuch a doctrine, wrought many miracles, ſuffered an ignominious death, and was afterwards worſhipped as God, having abundance of diſciples and followers, at firſt chiefly amongſt the vulgar, but a while after, amongſt ſeveral of the moſt wiſe and learned men; who in a ſhort ſpace of time did propagate their belief and doctrine into the moſt remote parts of the world: I ſay, all this is for the truth of the matter of fact, not

ſo much as doubted or called into queſtion, by *Julian*, or *Celſus*, or the *Jews* themſelves, or any other of the moſt avowed enemies of Chriſtianity. But we have it by as good certainty as any rational man can wiſh or hope for, that is, by Univerſal Teſtimony, as well of enemies as friends.

And if theſe things were ſo, as to the matter of fact, the common principles of nature will aſſure us, that 'tis not conſiſtent with the nature of the Deity, his Truth, Wiſdom or Juſtice, to work ſuch miracles in confirmation of a Lye or Impoſture.

Nor can it be reaſonably objected. That theſe miracles are now ceaſed; and we have not any ſuch extraordinary way to confirm the truth of our Religion: 'Tis ſufficient that they were upon the firſt plantation of it, when men were to be inſtituted and confirmed in that new Doctrine. And there may be as much of the wiſdom of Providence in the forbearing them now, as in working them then. It being not reaſonable to think that the univerſal Laws of Nature by which things are to be regularly guided in their natural courſe, ſhould frequently or upon every little occaſion be violated or diſordered. To

To which may be added *that* wonderful way whereby this Religion hath been propagated in the world, with much simplicity and infirmity in the first publishers of it; without arms, or faction, or favour of great men, or the perswasions of *Philosophers* or *Orators*; only by a naked proposal of plain evident Truth, with a firm resolution of suffering and dying for it, by which it hath subdued all kind of persecutions and oppositions, and surmounted whatever discouragement or resistance could be laid in its way, or made against it.

2. From the *Excellency* of the things contained in it, both in respect of the

{ *End* proposed,
{ *Means* for the attaining of it.

1. From the *End* it proposes, the chief reward which it sets before us, namely, the eternal vision and fruition of God. Which is so excellent in it self, and so suitable to a rational Being, as no other Religion or Profession whatsoever, hath thought of, or so expresly insisted upon.

Some of the learned *Heathen* have placed the happiness of Man in the external

ſenſual delights of this world; I mean the *Epicureans*, who though in other reſpects they were perſons of many excellent and ſublime ſpeculations, yet becauſe of their groſs error in this kind, they have been in all ages looked upon with a kind of execration and abhorrency, not only amongſt the *vulgar*, but likewiſe amongſt the learneder ſort of *Philoſophers*. 'Tis an opinion this, ſo very groſs and ignoble, as cannot be ſufficiently deſpiſed. It doth debaſe the underſtanding of man, and all the principles in him, that are ſublime and generous, extinguiſhing the very ſeeds of honour, and piety, and virtue, affording no room for actions or endeavours, that are truely great and noble; being altogether unworthy of the nature of Man, and doth reduce us to the condition of Beaſts.

Others of the wiſer *Heathen*, have ſpoken ſometimes doubtfully concerning a future eſtate, and therefore have placed the reward of virtue, in the doing of virtuous things. *Virtus eſt ſibi præmium.* Wherein though there be much of truth, yet it doth not afford encouragement enough, for the vaſt deſires of a rational ſoul.

Others

Others who have owned a ſtate after this life, have placed the Happineſs of it in groſs and ſenſual pleaſures, Feaſts and Gardens, and Company, and other ſuch low and groſs enjoyments.

Whereas the Doctrine of *Chriſtianity* doth fix it upon things, that are much more ſpiritual and ſublime; the Beatifical Viſion, a clear unerring underſtanding, a perfect tranquillity of mind, a conformity to God, a perpetual admiring and praiſing of him: Than which the mind of man cannot fancy any thing that is more excellent or deſireable.

2. As to the *Means* it directs to, for the attaining of this end, they are ſuitable both to the goodneſs and greatneſs of the *end* it ſelf.

1. For the Duties that are enjoyned in reference to *Divine worſhip*. They are ſo full of ſanctity and ſpiritual devotion, as may ſhame all the pompous ſolemnities of other Religions, in their coſtly ſacrifices, their dark wild myſteries, and external obſervances. Whereas this refers chiefly to the holineſs of the mind, reſignation to God, love of him, dependance upon him, ſubmiſſion to his Will, endeavouring to be like him.

2. And as for the Duties of the *ſecond-Table*, which concern our mutual converſation towards one another; It allows nothing that is hurtful or noxious, either to our ſelves, or others: Forbids all kind of injury or revenge, commands to overcome evil with good, to pray for enemies and perſecutors, doth not admit of any mental, much leſs any corporal uncleanneſs; doth not tolerate any immodeſt or uncomely word or geſture; forbids us to wrong others in their goods and poſſeſſions, or to miſpend our own; requires us to be very tender both of our own and other mens reputations: In brief, it injoyns nothing but what is helpful, and uſeful, and good for mankind. Whatever any Philoſophers have preſcribed concerning their moral virtues of *Temperance*, and *Prudence*, and *Patience*, and the duties of ſeveral relations, is here injoyned in a far more eminent, ſublime and comprehenſive manner. Beſides ſuch Examples and incitations to piety as are not to be parallel'd elſewhere. The whole Syſteme of its Doctrine being tranſcendently excellent, and ſo exactly conformable to the higheſt, pureſt reaſon, that in thoſe very things wherein it goes beyond the rules of Moral Philoſophy,

phy, we cannot in our beſt judgment but conſent and ſubmit to it.

In brief, it doth in every reſpect ſo fully anſwer the chief ſcope and deſign of Religion, in giving all imaginable honour and ſubmiſſion to the Deity, promoting the good of mankind, ſatisfying and ſupporting the mind of man, with the higheſt kind of enjoyments, that a rational ſoul can wiſh or hope for, as no other Religion or Profeſſion whatſoever can pretend unto.

What hath briefly been ſaid upon this argument may ſuffice to ſhew the exceeding folly and unreaſonableneſs of thoſe men who are ſceptical and indifferent as to any kind of Religion. 'Tis a vice this, that if it may not be ſtyled direct *Atheiſm*, yet certainly it is the very next degree to it. And there is too much reaſon to ſuſpect, that it doth in this generation very much abound, not only amongſt the *Vulgar*, but ſuch alſo as would be thought the greateſt *Wits*, and moſt knowing men. It hath been occaſioned by that heat and zeal of men in thoſe various contrary opinions, which have of late abounded, together with thoſe great ſcandals that have been given by the Profeſſors of Religion

on ſeveral hands. From whence men of corrupt minds have taken occaſion to doubt of all kind of Religion; and to look upon it only as a Political invention, which doth no farther oblige, than as the Laws of ſeveral Countries do provide for it. Theſe common ſcandals have been the *occaſion*, but the *true ground* at the bottom of ſuch mens prejudice and diſſatisfaction, is the ſtrictneſs and purity of this Religion, which they find puts too great a reſtraint and check upon their exorbitant luſts and paſſions.

I know they will *pretend* for their heſitation and indifferency in this kind, the want of clear and infallible evidence for the truth of Chriſtianity; than which nothing can be more abſurd and unworthy of a rational man. For let it be but impartially conſidered; what is it, that ſuch men would have? Do they expect Mathematical proof and certainty in Moral things? Why, they may as well expect to ſee with their ears, and hear with their eyes. Such kind of things (as I ſhewed at large in the beginning of this Treatiſe) being altogether as diſproportioned to ſuch kind of proofs, as the objects of the ſeveral ſenſes are to one another. The arguments or proof to be uſed in ſeveral matters

ters are of various and different kinds, according to the nature of the things to be proved. And it will become every rational man to yeild to ſuch proofs, as the nature of the thing which he enquires about is capable of: And that man is to be looked upon as froward and contentious, who will not reſt ſatisfied in ſuch kind of Evidence as is counted ſufficient, either by all others, or by moſt, or by the wiſeſt men.

If we ſuppoſe God to have made any Revelation of his Will to mankind, can any man propoſe or fancy any better way for conveying down to Poſterity the Certainty of it, than that clear and univerſal Tradition which we have for the Hiſtory of the Goſpel? And muſt not that man be very unreaſonable, who will not be content with as much evidence for an *ancient Book* or *matter of Fact*, as any thing of that nature is capable of? If it be only infallible and mathematical Certainty that can ſettle his mind, why ſhould he believe that he was born of ſuch Parents, and belongs to ſuch a Family? 'Tis poſſible men might have combined together to delude him with ſuch a Tradition. Why may he not as well think, that he was born a Prince and not a Subject, and con-

conſequently deny all duties of ſubjection and obedience to thoſe above him? There is nothing ſo wild and extravagant, to which men may not expoſe themſelves by ſuch a kind of nice and ſcrupulous incredulity.

Whereas, if to the enquiries about Religion a man would but bring with him the ſame candour and ingenuity, the ſame readineſs to be inſtructed, which he doth to the ſtudy of humane Arts and Sciences, that is, a mind free from violent prejudices and a deſire of contention; It can hardly be imagined, but that he muſt be convinced and ſubdued by thoſe clear evidences which offer themſelves to every inquiſitive mind, concerning the truth of the *Principles of Religion* in general, and concerning the *Divine Authority* of the *H. Scriptures*, and of the *Chriſtian Religion*.

FINIS.

A

SERMON

Preached at the

FUNERAL

OF THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

JOHN

Late Lord Bishop of *Chester.*

At the *Guildhall* Chappel *LONDON,*
On *Thursday* the 12. of *December,* 1672.

By *William Lloyd* D. D.
Dean of *Bangor*, and one of His Majesties
Chaplains in Ordinary.

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Heb. 13. 7.

Remember them which have the Rule over you, who have ſpoken to you the word of God; whoſe Faith follow, conſidering the end of their converſation.

IN handling this Text of holy Scripture, that we may mingle nothing of Humane Affections, that our Paſſions may give no Interruption to you in hearing, or to me in ſpeaking; I ſhould deſire to ſuppreſs them quite, if it were poſſible. And poſſible it is, where they are ſlightly raiſed, as upon common and ordinary occaſions:

ſions: But where they are grounded and ſtrong, where they dare argue, and ſeem to have Reaſon on their ſide, as there is too much in ſight for ours; there I think it is in vain to endeavour it: The only way in this caſe, is to give them ſome kind of Vent, to diſcharge them in part, and to govern what remains of the Affections.

You will I hope the rather bear with my Infirmity, that I cannot contain from deploring the Loſs, the irreparable Loſs that we ſuffer, I think all ſuffer, in the death of this Eminent Perſon. He was the man in whom his Friends had experience of much good, and had hopes of much more; not ſo much for his greatneſs or power, as abſtracting from theſe, for what they found in himſelf, which was a great and manifold Bleſſing to all that lived within his converſation. He

was

was a Father, a Counſellor, a Comforter, a Helper, a ſure Friend: He was all they could wiſh in every Relation, and by the courſe of Nature, might have been for many years. But for our ſins, (though for his unſpeakable advantage) the great and wiſe God was not pleaſed to continue that Bleſſing; He took him out of this World, when for ought we could judge, there was moſt need of ſuch men to live in it; and when we had much reaſon to expect more good than ever by his living in it.

Oh the Unſearchable ways and Counſels of God! Oh the Blindneſs of Humane hopes and expectations! While we pleaſe our ſelves with the good we have in hand, while we reach out for more, as if there would never be an end, within a few days all withers, all

vaniſheth to This: We have Nothing left, but what it grieves us to ſee; We have nothing remains, but what we are willing to be rid of, a poor ſhell of earth, that we make haſte to bury out of our ſight.

Yes; of wiſe and good men, which is their Privileg above others, there remains after Death, a Memory, an Example which they leave behind them, as a ſacred *Depoſitum* for us to keep and uſe until we ſee them again. Are theſe things Nothing in our ſight? They are above all price in the ſight of God; who, that they may be ſo to us, both telleth us the worth, and recommends them to our eſteem, and requires the fruit of them in many places of Scripture: But in none with more Application to our preſent Occaſion, than in my Text. I ſhall ſufficiently Juſtifie

ſtifie my choice of it, if I can but make it be underſtood: I ſhall ſhew the full Import of it, in thoſe duties which it contains: I ſhall endeavour to ſtir you up to practiſe them with reſpect to this preſent occaſion.

Firſt, For the underſtanding of my Text, we are to look for no help from what goes next before it, or after it: For the whole buſineſs of it is contained within it ſelf. It lies in the heap among other directions, which without any certain connexion between them, were given by the Writer of this Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, that is, to thoſe *Jews* who were converted to be *Chriſtians*.

For the time when it was written, we are certain of this, that it was while *Timothy* lived; for he is mentioned as living in the 24 Verſe of this Chapter. And he being

there ſaid to have ſuffered Impriſonment for the Goſpel, this brings us a little nearer to the knowledg of the time: For then it muſt be after both S. *Pauls* Epiſtles to *Timothy*. In the laſt of thoſe Epiſtles, which was ſome years after the other, S. *Paul* ſpeaks much of his own Impriſonment for the Goſpel: He warns *Timothy* oft, that he muſt ſuffer for the Goſpel: He inſtructs him what to do when God ſhall call him to ſuffer. Not a word of any thing that he had ſuffered already: Nay, he counſels him as a young man, that had never been tried. He invites him to *Rome*, which was the great place of tryal; in which place, as it appears in the cloſe of this Chapter, *Timothy* did ſuffer that Impriſonment for the Goſpel, from which he was deliver'd, when this Epiſtle was written. It appears, that after the Epiſtle

piſtle to *Timothy*, how long after we know not, he did go to *Rome*, as *Paul* will'd him. How long he ſtaid there we know not, ere he did ſuffer impriſonment. How long he was in Priſon, we know not, ere he was ſet at liberty. Only we know, it was a conſiderable time, we have reaſon to think it might be ſome years; it might be many years that this Epiſtle was written after the ſecond Epiſtle to *Timothy*.

And if ſo, then it was written, not only as *Theodoret* ſays, long after the death of *James* the Brother of *John*: But account it how you will, this Epiſtle was written, after the death of *James* the Brother of our Lord: Which *James* being the firſt Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, and the other *James* an Apoſtle, that is, a Biſhop at large, and both theſe being put to death at *Jeruſa-*

lem; Not to ſearch into Church-Hiſtory for thoſe others of their order, who dyed before this time in other places; nor to gueſs how many others were dead, that are not recorded in Church-Hiſtory: If we think of no more but theſe two eminent ſervants of Chriſt, we cannot be to ſeek of the underſtanding of this Text, nor of the application to our particular purpoſe. I ſay not, but it may have a more general extent. There is a memory due, not only to the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and to the Biſhops their Succeſſors; but to all other good Miniſters of Chriſt, yea to all other exemplary Chriſtians. But if the Apoſtle had meant this only of Biſhops, I cannot gueſs that he would have it expreſt otherwiſe, than he hath done in my Text.

To prove this, I muſt have recourſe to the Original, and not wholly

wholly depend upon our *Engliſh* Tranſlation. For that he meant this of Biſhops, it appears not ſufficiently, and of them being dead, not at all, in our Tranſlation. And yet from the Original, I ſee no reaſon to doubt, that our Apoſtle in this Text, meant no other but Biſhops, and thoſe departed this life.

For the Order of Biſhops, it is deſcribed by thoſe acts of *Ruling* and *Teaching*, in the words of our Tranſlation; but it is much more expreſly by the word ἡγούμενοι in the Original. For the meaning of which word, to whom ſhould we reſort, but either to the Greeks, in whoſe Language; or to the Jews, for whoſe immediate uſe this was written? Among the Greeks ἡγούμενοι is a general word, it ſignifies Rulers Eccleſiaſtical or Civil. In this Verſe they take it for Eccleſiaſtical

Rulers: So *Chryſoſtom* on my Text; and *Oecumenius*, περὶ Ἐπισκόπων, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of Biſhops in this Verſe. If the Jews would ſay ſo too, what could we have more? They do ſay it, as much as we have reaſon to expect. In their Traditional Language they call one of our Biſhops אנסין which in effect is the word in my Text. So then we have the conſent both of Greeks and of Hebrews, that is, of them who had moſt reaſon to know the meaning of the word, that Biſhops are meant by the word ἡγούμενοι in my Text.

That the Apoſtle here ſpeaks not of Living, but of Dead Biſhops: of them that *Had* the *Rule* before *that* time; though 'tis rendred, that *Have*, in our Tranſlation; it appeareth by other words in my Text. *Remember them*, ſays the Apoſtle: What, thoſe that are preſent? They

They are not the objects of Memory, but of Senſe. Remember τῶν ἡγουμένων, the good Biſhops you have had: οἵτινες ἐλάλησαν, *them that have ſpoken to you*, that have ſpoken their laſt, and ſhall ſpeak no more in this world: ἀναθεωροῦντες, *conſidering*, looking back, or looking up to τὴν ἔκβασιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς, *the end of their converſation.* Ἀναστροφὴ ſignifies the whole courſe of this life, Ἔκβασις is the end or period of it. Look back, ſays the Apoſtle, to your Biſhops deceaſed, *conſider their end*, or *Exit*, or going out of this world.

To confirm this, if any doubt, I ſhall deſire him to compare this Verſe with the 17 of this Chapter. In both Verſes the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the ἡγούμενοι, that is, of Biſhops, as I have interpreted and proved. In the 17. he ſhews our duty to the living, *Obey them*, ſays the Apoſtle,

and

and Submit your ſelves, for they watch for your ſouls. In this Verſe he ſhews our duty to Biſhops deceaſed; *Remember them, and follow their Faith, conſidering the end of their converſation.*

I think more needs not be ſaid, to ſhew the ſcope of my Text, and how applicable it is to our preſent Occaſion. It being clear that the Apoſtle ſpeaks here of Biſhops, and of them being departed this life.

I now proceed to the duties required at our hands; μνημονεύετε, and μιμεῖσθε, *Remember* and *Imitate.*

Firſt, *Remember.* 'Tis a natural deſire that men have, to be remembred when they are dead. We do not find it is ſo in any other creature: They deſire to live as long as they can; but for ought we can judge, by any Indication, they have no regard to what ſhall come

come after. The reaſon is plain, for their Being determines with their life. But for man, among many other tokens of Immortality, he hath by ſecret Inſtinct, a Natural deſire to be thought of, and ſpoken of in after-times. We ſee this, not only in them that are inflamed with the hope of a Future life; but even in thoſe, that, for ought appears to us, know or think little of any more but the preſent.

What elſe made the *Egyptian* Kings lay out their wealth on Pyramids, and the like ſtupendious buildings? What moved the old *Greeks* and the *Romans*, with ſo much care and expence to leave Statues and other Monuments, with Inſcriptions of their names? What meant thoſe in the unlettered Nations, by the much harder ſhifts they have made to convey any thing

thing of themſelves to Poſterity? I need not ſeek for inſtances of this in remote Times and Countries, when we ſee 'tis ſo frequent in our Age, and perhaps no-where more than in this City; for men of deſign, that think long beforehand, above all other things, to provide for this kind of Immortality. Some venture their lives, others wear out themſelves, they do and ſuffer any thing to get eſtates: Not for themſelves, that might be happier without them; nor ſo much for their known Heirs, whom they load with Entails, as for men whom they know not, but only hope they will be in after-times. *For their inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling-place to all generations: they call their lands by their own names. This their way is their folly,* and thoſe that ſee it are ſuch

fools

fools to take after them, ſays *David*, *Pſal.* 49. 11.

But if this deſign take, it muſt be in ſpite of God, who hath declared it ſhall not do. He will thwart wicked men. They that provide not for the true Immortality, ſhall loſe their deſign in this ſhadow of it. Either their name ſhall be forgotten; God hath threatned *he will cut it off, he will blot it out, their memory ſhall periſh with them*: Or if it ſurvive, it ſhall be to their ſhame, *their name ſhall rot*, *Prov.* 10. 7. What they build for fame, ſhall be like *Abſoloms* Pillar, which remains to this day; but the paſſers by throw ſtones at it, in deteſtation of his Memory: Such is generally, though not always, the curſe of God that purſues wicked men.

Whereas contrariwiſe it is the Promiſe of God to the Juſt, *that they*

they ſhall always be had in remembrance, *Pſal.* 112.6. And that *their memory ſhall be bleſſed as far as known*, *Prov.* 10.7. Promiſes which, as all other of Temporal things, are to be underſtood with reſervation to the Divine Oeconomy, to that wiſdom of God which orders all things in the Government of the world. It becometh not the Majeſty of him that governs all things, to break his courſe, and to work Miracles upon every particular occaſion. 'Tis enough that he generally provideth that the ſame thing may be done otherwiſe, and declares it to thoſe by whom it ought to be done. If they do it not, if there be a faileur in them; his Promiſe is not void, his word is not broken, ſince it was given with that Condition: Which being not performed by them that were to have done it, he can make reparation

tion to thoſe that ſuffer by it; yea he hath done it already in this, that he hath given them that which this typifies. And what if they fall ſhort of the ſhadow, when they have the ſubſtance, in a better and true Immortality?

The mean while we ſee what is required on our parts. As the ſervants of God, out of that ſtore which he hath given us, We are to pay what he hath promiſed good men. 'Tis that which all naturally deſire, but wicked men ſhall not attain; only to the juſt, God hath promiſed that we ſhall *remember* them, and he commands that we ſhould do it, eſpecially for good Biſhops departed this life.

Our remembrance of them doth not differ in kind, but in degree, from what we owe to the memory of others. 'Tis a duty we are to pay

pay them above others, in our Thoughts, in our Affections, in our Words, and in our Actions and Lives.

First, in our *Thoughts*; 'tis not a ſimple *remembrance* that God requires; for that being an act of the ſenſitive ſoul, as I conceive, doth not directly fall under precept. For it is not in our power, to remember or forget, either what or when we pleaſe. But it is in our power, to do thoſe acts which conduce to the exciting, or to the helping of our memory. This is that which God requires at our hands, that we ſhould endeavour to turn our minds towards ſuch objects, and contemplate in them the gifts and graces of God: that as oft as we think of them, we ſhould acknowledg that good which was in them, and which we have received by their means: That we

ſhould

ſhould pay them that honourable eſteem which we owe to our ſpiritual Parents and Benefactors.

If we think upon them heartily in this manner, it will work ſomething upon our *Affections*. We cannot but be ſenſible of the want of ſuch men, and therefore grieved for our loſs, when they are taken from us; as the *Aſian* Biſhops were at thoſe words of St. *Paul*, when he ſaid, *they ſhould ſee his face no more*. Though God intend it for their gain, whom he takes to himſelf, and he takes them in that time, which ſuits beſt with their Circumſtances: Yet, even then, we have cauſe to grieve for our ſelves, and for the Church, who are deprived of the preſence and uſe of ſuch men. How much more, when for ought we know, they are taken away for our ſins? When for ought we know, it was becauſe the age

was not worthy of them? For ought we know, 'tis in order to ſome judgment of God, which will come the ſooner when they are gone, when we have filled up the meaſure of our iniquities?

When *Elijah* was taken away in a very evil age, *Eliſha* cryed out, *O my Father, my Father, the Chariots and Horſemen of Iſrael!* What will become of *Iſrael* now thou art gone? We dare not think ſo highly of any one man. We have no ſuch cauſe to deſpond of our Nation. When it is bad, we are to do our parts to make it better, to pray that God would ſend more Labourers into his Harveſt, that he would double his gifts and bleſſings on thoſe that are left.

And for thoſe we have loſt, we muſt reſign them to God; both acknowledging his bounty in giving them to us, and ſubmitting to his will,

will, in taking them to himſelf. So S. *Bernard* on the death of his Brother *Gerard*, *Lord*, ſays he, *thou haſt given, and thou haſt taken away; though we grieve that thou haſt taken away, yet we cannot forget that thou didſt give him.* Yea, we owe not only ſubmiſſion to God, but thankfulneſs too for their ſakes who are delivered by this means from ſo great and ſuch manifold evils, as continually hover about us in this life. From ſickneſs and pain, from labour and danger, from ſorrow, and fear, and care, and what not? being delivered from Sin which is the Cauſe, and from that Fleſh which is the Center of all this.

They are paſt all evils elſe, that have overcome Death: They leave ſorrow to us, who call our ſelves the living: Their life, the only true life, is immutable Joy, eter-

nal Reſt, Peace, and Felicity.

Which if we ſeriouſly believe, if we deſire to be with them, we cannot ſorrow for our loſs, without joy for their gain, and thanksgiving on their behalf, to that good God, *who hath given them the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

But thus much we owe upon the death of every true Chriſtian, though of never ſo mean a rank and condition. We are to be thankful to God for his mercies, and to profeſs it, as we are taught in the Offices of our Church; which have the ſame words of burial, for the meaneſt of our communion, as for thoſe that are higheſt in their Graces and Gifts.

But there is a remembrance in Words that is due to theſe, and not to the other; namely, the due praiſe of thoſe their excellent Graces and Gifts; which though they have

not

not of themſelves, but through the bounty and liberality of God, who is therefore to be chiefly reſpected and glorified, in all the praiſe that we give to his creatures: Yet ſince he is pleaſed to do them this honour above others, and to make choice of them whom he ſo dignifies; we are bound to allow it them, we are to follow Gods choice, to give them praiſe whom he hath ſo qualified for it. Only with this care, that we do it truly, not to flatter the dead; and profitably, for the example and imitation of the living.

We have ſo much reaſon to do this, that they who had only reaſon to guide them, the *Gentiles*, upon the death of any eminent perſons, had Orations made publickly in their praiſe. The *Jews*, without any particular Law for it, had honour done to the Me-

mory of Worthy perſons at their Funerals, 2 *Chron.*32. *ult.* The Rites of it are partly deſcribed, 2 *Chron.* 16. 14. They laid their dead in a bed full of the richeſt perfumes, which alſo were publickly burnt at the Interment. To which I conceive the Preacher alludes, *Eccleſ.* 7. 1. where he ſays, *A good name is better than precious oyntment, and the day of ones death than the day of ones birth.*

When one cometh into the World, none knows how he may prove; if he do well in it, he goes out with this publick teſtimony. After which the *Jews* never mentioned ſuch perſons without a bleſſing on their memory.

But above all others, the Primitive Chriſtians were very obſervant this way. They ſaw it was the will of their Lord and Maſter, that the good work which was done

done upon him by *Mary*, ſhould be kept in perpetual memory, and is therefore recorded in the Goſpel. They ſaw how the works of *Dorcas* were ſhewn at her death, the Coats and Garments which ſhe made for the poor. They ſaw what need there was of great Incentives, in thoſe days, when Chriſtianity was a moſt dangerous Profeſſion. It is of no ſmall force, to make men love a Religion, when they ſee it infuſes excellent Principles, that it excites ſo ſuitable practiſes, that it is proof againſt ſuffering and death. And the experience of that power it hath in ſome, provokes and animates others to the ſame.

Upon theſe and the like conſiderations, and perhaps with alluſion to that Text, where S. *John* is ſaid to have ſeen the ſouls of the Martyrs under the Altar; They

had their *Memorias Martyrum*, their places of Worſhip, where they placed the Altars over the bodies of their Martyrs. What, with any intention to worſhip the Martyrs? It was ſo ſuggeſted by the Adverſaries, and as vehemently denied by the Chriſtians of thoſe times. By thoſe of *Smyrna*, in the undoubted acts of *Polycarpus*: *We cannot* (ſay they) *worſhip any other than Chriſt*; *We love the Martyrs as being followers of Chriſt*; *We celebrate the days of their paſſions with Joy*; *We do it both in remembrance of thoſe Champions of God, and to train up and prepare others for the like conflicts.*

Beſides this, which was peculiar to the Martyrs, they had a lower degree of remembrance, for Biſhops, and Confeſſors, and all other eminent perſons departed this life: whom they not only praiſed

in

in Orations at their Funerals, but writ their names in their Diptychs, or two-leaved Records, which contained in one page all the names of the Living; in the other, the Dead that were of note in the Church.

All these were recited in the Communion-Service: Where, as the Living for themselves; so for the Dead, came their Friends, and gave Oblations and Alms. Which, before they were distributed among the poor, were first offered up to God in a prayer, like that which we use for the Church Militant here on Earth. These Doles were their only Sacrifices for the dead: Only Alms to the poor, *with which sacrifices God is well-pleased.* And their prayers were not for any deliverance from pains; unless the Patriarchs, and Prophets, and the Apostles, and Virgin Mother of Christ,

Chriſt, were in the ſame pains too, and needed the ſame Deliverance. For they were all mentioned alike, and together, as it is to be ſeen in the ancienteſt Liturgies.

Among all theſe Innocent Offices and Rites of the Primitive Chriſtians, was there any thing of prayer for ſouls in Purgatory? Was there any thing of prayer to Saints departed this life? Was there any foundation for thoſe ſuperſtitious Obſervances, Of adoring their Reliques, of Proſtration to their Images, of Pilgrimage to their Shrines, of making Vows, of ſaying Maſſes, of Offering to them, and the like? The Papiſts ſay there was, they plead the practice of the Church for it, they wreſt places of Scripture to their purpoſe. Nay the *Rhemiſts* and others, alledge this very Text, without which I ſhould not have mention'd them at this time.

But

But as the Learnedſt men among themſelves have been ſo juſt not to charge this upon my Text, and ſome of them confeſs they have no ground for theſe things in any one Text of Canonical Scripture: So they would do us but right to acknowledg, that none of theſe things was practis'd for ſome hundreds of years after Chriſtianity came into the world.

In thoſe Primitive times all their Offices for the Dead, were, either to give Teſtimony of that Faith in which they died, and that death had not diſſolv'd their Communion with the Living: or they were to bleſs God for their holy Life, and happy Death: or to Pray to him, not for their deliverance from Purgatory, of which there was no Faith in thoſe times; but for the Increaſe of that Good which they believ'd them to be poſſeſt of already, or

for

for the Attainment of that farther good which they thought they were ſure of, namely, for their ſpeedy and happy Reſurrection, for their perfect diſcharge at the day of Judgement, for the Conſummation of their bliſs with their own in the Kingdom of Glory.

Not to ſay how the Fathers differ among themſelves in theſe particulars; or how many of theſe particulars are omitted in the Roman Church as well as ours; it is enough that here is nothing makes for them, but much againſt thoſe their Errors and Corruptions. All that is agreed on all hands, or that we find in the Practice of the firſt Ages, being ſufficiently contain'd in thoſe Offices of our Church; in the prayer for the Church-Militant, in the Collect on *All-Saints* day, and in the Office for the burial of the Dead; where we pray, *That*

it

it would pleaſe God of his gracious goodneſs, ſhortly to accompliſh the number of his Elect, and to haſten his Kingdom, that we, with all thoſe that are departed in the true faith of his holy Name, may have our perfect conſummation and bliſs, both in body and ſoul, in his everlaſting glory.

Laſtly, *Remembrance* in *Action* is the other duty enjoyn'd in my Text, μιμεῖσθε τὴν πίστιν, *Imitate their Faith*, that is, their Chriſtian profeſſion and practice, their whole Life and Converſation, according to their own belief of that word which they have ſpoken.

The Reaſon of this duty is plain: for it is our buſineſs in this world to recover the Image of God in which he created us; to be like him here in Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, that we may be like him hereafter in Glory and Happineſs.

To

To this End, God has given us thoſe Lineaments of himſelf, which are written ſufficiently in our Nature, but more fully and diſtinctly in Scripture. In which Scripture, he ſo oft and ſo vehemently requires us, *Be ye Holy, as I am Holy; be ye Juſt, as I am Juſt; be ye Merciful, as I am Merciful; be ye Pure, as I am Pure; be ye Perfect, as your heavenly Father is Perfect.*

This good Word of God, which was given by the Prophets and Apoſtles, is ſtill inculcated on us by them *that ſpeak to us the word of God.* Which Office being primarily of Biſhops, as appears in my Text, They are firſt and above all others to conform themſelves to it, to ſhew others how poſſible and how practicable it is.

Our Apoſtle ſuppos'd this in thoſe Primitive Biſhops in my Text.

God

God requires it of all that ſucceed them in the Church. So of *Timothy*, though he were young in Age, yet being in that Place, *Be thou an Example to believers in word, in converſation, in ſpirit, in faith, in truth*, 1 Tim. 4. 12. and in the laſt Verſe, *Take heed to thy Self, and to thy Doctrine: Do this conſtantly and continually, and ſo thou ſhalt ſave both thy ſelf and them that hear thee.*

Whether they do this or no, they are our *Teachers* and *Rulers*; therefore in the 17 Verſe of this Chapter, while they live, we muſt *obey* their Word, and *ſubmit* to their Government. When they are dead, both for what they are, and were, we may do well to ſay no ill of them; and ſince we can ſay no good, e'en forget them, and leave them to God.

But

But if they are ſuch as they ought, which the Apoſtle ſuppoſes in my Text, if they live as men that believe themſelves what they ſay: 'Tis our duty, not only to *ſubmit* and *obey* them while they live; but alſo to *Remember* them when they are dead: *Remember* them, in our *thoughts*, with that honour they deſerve; In our *Affections*, with a due ſenſe of our loſs, and their gain: Remember them *in words*, with the juſt praiſe of their actions and lives: In our prayers to God, with due thankfulneſs for their graces and gifts in this life, and for the glory they receive after death: Laſtly, remember to *follow* them in that holy way, which leads to ſo happy an end: In our Apoſtles words, *follow their Faith, conſidering* the event, the bleſſed *end of their* good *converſation.*

What

What my Text ſays in general of Biſhops deceaſed, 'tis moſt eaſie to apply. I know it hath been done all this while, by them that knew the virtuous and great mind that lately dwelt in this body. They know the truth of all I ſhall ſay, and much more that might be ſaid in his juſt commendation. But the little I can bring within the time I have left, being ſaid from many years experience, will at leaſt ſtir up thoſe that knew him not, to enquire; and if they find theſe things true, they know their duty of *Remembrance* and *Imitation*.

I ſhall not be minute, in drawing all I ſay under theſe heads: for I ſpeak to them that can diſtinguiſh and ſort things, as they belong to the one, or to the other.

To begin with the Natural endowments of his Mind; I cannot think of him without juſt reflection upon that Paradox, of the Equality of Souls. He was ſurely a great Inſtance to the contrary; having that largeneſs of Soul in every reſpect, which was much above the rate of ordinary men. He had an Underſtanding that extended to all parts of uſeful Learning and Knowledg; a Will always diſpoſed to Great, and Publick, and Generous things. He had a natural averſion from all idle ſpeculations, and from the eager purſuit of ſmall and frivolous deſigns. In great matters, he judged ſo well, that he was not uſually ſurprized with events. He purſued his intentions with ſuch equalneſs of mind, that he was never carried

ried beyond the calmneſs of his Natural Temper, except through his zeal for Publick good, or where his Friend was concerned.

What he was in his Studies, I have reaſon to know, that have often been tired with ſtudying with him. He was indefatigable, and would have worn himſelf out, if he had not been relieved with multiplicity of buſineſs. However, he impaired by it, a Body which ſeemed to have been built for a long Age, and contracted thoſe Infirmities that haſtened his death.

The effect of his Studies, in his Preaching and Writings, are ſufficiently known, and would have been much more, if God had given him time.

As for his Preaching, it was ſometimes famous near this place; though he ſought rather the profit, than the praiſe of his hearers. He ſpoke ſolid truth, with as little ſhew of Art as was poſſible. He expreſt all things in their true and natural colours; with that aptneſs and plainneſs of Speech, that grave natural way of Elocution, that ſhewed he had no deſign upon his hearers. His plainneſs was beſt for the inſtruction of the ſimple; and for the better ſort, who were in truth an Intelligent Auditory, it was enough that they might ſee he had no mind to deceive them. He applied himſelf rather to their Underſtanding than Affections. He ſaw ſo much of the beauty of Goodneſs himſelf, that he thought the bare ſhewing of it was enough

to

to make all wiſe men, as it did him, to be in love with it.

In his Writings he was judicious and plain, like one that valued not the circumſtances ſo much as the ſubſtance. And he ſhewed it in whatſoever Argument he undertook; ſometimes beating out new untravel'd ways, ſometimes repairing thoſe that had been beaten already: No ſubject he handled, but I dare ſay is the better for him; and will be the ſier for them that come after him.

If in theſe he went ſometimes beſide his Profeſſion, it was in following the Deſign of it, to make men wiſer and better, which I think is the buſineſs of Univerſal Knowledg. And this he promoted with much zeal and ſincerity, in hope of the great Be-

nefit that may accrew to mankind.

It was his aim, as in all things, ſo eſpecially in that which, I conceive, is much more cenſured than underſtood; I mean, in the deſign of the Royal Society. He joined himſelf to it with no other end, but to promote Modern knowledg, without any contempt or leſſening of thoſe great men in former times. With due honour to whom, he thought it lawful for others to do that which, we have no reaſon to doubt, they themſelves would have done if they were living.

I would not ſeem to excuſe that which deſerveth commendation and encouragement; or to commend other things, for want of ſubject in him. Therefore leaving this Theme in better hands,

I pro-

I proceed next to ſpeak of his Virtues and Graces; and theſe the rather, as being both to be *remembred* and *followed*.

And in ſpeaking of theſe, where ſhall I begin? Nay when ſhall I end, if I ſay all that may be ſpoken? I think it not worth while to ſpeak of thoſe that are Vulgar, though he had them alſo in no common degree: Nor would I ſeem to make any Virtue a Propriety. But there are thoſe which are not common to many, and were generally acknowledged to be in him; though they appeared not ſo to ſome other men, as they did to thoſe that intimately knew him.

His Prudence was great, I think it ſeldom failed in any thing to which he applied himſelf. And yet he wanted that part, which

ſome hold to be eſſential; he ſo wanted Diſſimulation, that he had rather too much openneſs of heart. It was Sincerity indeed that was Natural to him; he ſo abhorred a Lye, that he was not at all for ſhew; he could not put on any thing that look'd like it. And preſuming the ſame of other men, through exceſs of Benignity, he would be ſometimes deceived, in believing they were what they ſeem'd to be, and what he knew they ought to have been.

His greatneſs of mind, was known to all that knew any thing of him. He neither eagerly ſought any Dignity, nor declined any Capacity of doing good. He look'd down upon Wealth, as much as others admire it: He knew the uſe of an Eſtate, but did not covet it. What he yearly received

of

of the Church, he beſtowed in its ſervice. As for his Temporal eſtate, being ſecured againſt want, he ſought no farther, he ſet up his reſt; I have heard him ſay often, *I will be no richer*, and I think he was as good as his word.

As for Revenge, how could it enter into the breaſt of him that hated nothing but that which makes us hateful to God? I ſay not but he had a ſenſe of perſonal injuries; and eſpecially of thoſe that reflected upon his name, when they proceeded from thoſe that had good names of their own. What others ſaid, he deſpiſed; but by thoſe he would often wiſh he had been better underſtood: That he was not, he bore as his misfortune; he would not requite them with the like, but mention'd them with all due Reſpect, and was always ready

dy to oblige them, and to do them good.

Yet it was not ſo deſirable, (I ſay not to be his Enemy, for He did not account them ſo, but) to be at thoſe terms with him, as to be his Acquaintance or Friend. They that were never ſo little familiar with him, could not but find, as well Benefit as Delight in his converſation. His Diſcourſe was commonly of uſeful things; it never cauſed trouble or wearineſs to the Hearer. Yet he would venture to diſpleaſe one for his good; and indeed he was the man that ever I knew, for that moſt needful, and leaſt practiſed point of Friendſhip. He would not ſpare to give ſeaſonable reproof, and wholeſome advice, when he ſaw occaſion. I never knew any that would do it ſo freely, and that

that knew how to manage that freedom of ſpeech ſo inoffenſively.

It was his way of Friendſhip, not ſo much to oblige men, as to do them good. He did this not ſlightly and ſuperficially, but like one that made it his Buſineſs. He durſt do for his Friend, any thing that was honeſt, and no more. He would undertake nothing but what well became him, and then he was unwearied till he had effected it.

As he concerned himſelf for his Friend, in all other reſpects, ſo eſpecially in that, which went neareſt to him of all earthly concernments. He would not ſuffer any blot to be thrown, or to lye upon his Friends good Name, or his Memory. And that Office I am obliged to requite, in giving ſome

ſome account of that which has been ſpoken by ſome to his diſadvantage.

I ſhall neglect, for he did ſo, any frivolous reports; but that which ſeems to have any weight in it, as far as I have obſerved, is, that he had not that zeal for the Church, that they would ſeem to have that object this. He ſeemed to look upon the Diſſenters with too much favour to their perſons and ways.

As to the perſons: No doubt that goodneſs of Nature, that true Chriſtian Principle, which made him willing to think well of all men, and to do good, or at leaſt no hurt to any, might and ought to extend it ſelf to them among others. But beſides, he was inclined to it by his education under his Grandfather Mr. *Dod*,

Dod, a truly pious and learned man; who yet was a Diſſenter himſelf in ſome things.

Not that he had any delight in contradiction, or could find in his heart to diſturb the peace of the Church for thoſe matters: He was ſo far from it, that as I have frequently heard from this his Grandchild and others, when ſome thought their Diſſents ground enough for a War, he declared himſelf againſt it, and confirmed others in their Allegiance: He profeſt to the laſt a juſt hatred of that horrid Rebellion. Now his Relation to this man, and converſation with thoſe of his Principles, might incline him to hope the like of others of that way. And when he found them farther off from the unity of the Church; he might poſſibly overdo, through the vehemence of

of his desire, to bring them off of their Prejudices, and to reduce them to the Unity of the Church; in which his Grandfather lived and dyed: Why might he not hope the same of other Dissenters?

As for himself, he was so far from Approving their ways, that in the worst of times, when one here present bewailed to him the Calamities of the Church, and declared his Obedience even then to the Laws of it: He incouraged him in it, he desired his friendship, and protected both him and many others, by an interest that he had gained, and made use of chiefly for such purposes.

How he demeaned himself then, is known in both Universities; where he governed with praise, and left a very grateful Remembrance

brance behind him. How in the next times ſince, I cannot ſpeak in a better Place. And when I have named this City, and the two Univerſities, I think he could not be placed in a better Light in this Nation. There were enough that could judg, and he did not uſe to diſguiſe himſelf; I appeal to you that converſed with him in thoſe days, What zeal he hath expreſt, for the Faith, and for the unity of the Church: How he ſtood up in defence of the Order and Government: How he hath aſſerted the Liturgy, and the Rites of it: He conformed himſelf to every thing that was commanded. Beyond which, for any man to be vehement, in little and unneceſſary things, whether for or againſt them, he could not but diſlike; and as his free man-

manner was, he hath oft been heard to call it Fanaticalneſs. How this might be repreſented I know not, or how his deſign of comprehenſion might be underſtood.

Sure I am, that ſince he came into the Government of the Church, to which he was called in his Abſence; he ſo well became the Order, that it out-did the expectation of all that did not very well know him. He filled his place with a Goodneſs anſwerable to the reſt of his life; and with a Prudence above it, conſidering the two extreams, which were nowhere ſo much as in his Dioceſs. Though he was, as before, very tender to thoſe that differed from him; yet he was, as before, exactly conformable himſelf, and brought others to Conformity, ſome Emi-

Eminent men in his Dioceſs. He endeavoured to bring in all that came within his reach, and might have had great ſucceſs, if God had pleaſed to continue him.

But having given full proof of his intentions and deſires, it pleaſed God to reſerve the fruit for other hands, from which we have great cauſe to expect much good to the Church.

He was in perfect Health in all other reſpects; when a known Infirmity, from an unknown cauſe, that had been eaſier to cure, than it was to diſcover, ſtole upon him, and ſoon became incurable.

He was for many days in a proſpect of Death, which he ſaw as it approached, and felt it come on by degrees. Some days before he died, he found within

himself, as he often said, a *Sentence of Death*. In all this time, first of Pain, then of dreadful Apprehension, at last in the presence of Death; Who ever saw him dismaid? Who ever found him surprized? or heard a word from him, unbecoming a wise man, and a true Christian? It was my infelicity to be so engaged, that I could not duly attend him; and so deceived with vain hopes, that I believed him not dying, till he was dead. But at the times I was with him, I saw great cause to admire his Faith towards God, his Zeal for his Church, his Constancy of Mind, his Contempt of the World, and his Chearful hopes of Eternity. I have heard much more upon these heads, from those that were with him. Some of

of you may have heard other things from other men. It hath been the way of our Adversaries to entitle themselves to dying men, even those, whose whole life was a Testimony against them. Thus after the Death of our Famous *Jewel*, the Papists were pleased to say, he dyed of their Religion. *Militiere* hath ventured to insinuate the same, of our late King of blessed and glorious memory. Mens *Tongues* and Pens are their *own*; but lest they should abuse them and you, and the Memory of this worthy Prelate, as they have abus'd others, (though nothing needs to be said to such groundless Calumnies) I declare, and that upon most certain grounds, That he died in the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the

Communion of the Church of *England*, as it is by Law eſtabliſhed.

He died only too ſoon for the Church, and for his Friends; But for himſelf he had lived long enough. He has lived long enough that dyes well. For whatſoever he wants of that which we call time, it is added, though it adds nothing to Eternity.

As for us that are now to try how we can bear the want of thoſe many bleſſings we enjoyed in him; What ſhall we ſay? We muſt ſubmit to the Will of God. Our Comfort is, that we ſhall follow, and come together again in due time. Till when, Farewel pious and virtuous Soul, Farewel great and excellent man, Farewel worthy Prelate and faithful Friend. We have thy Memory

mory and Example, Thou haſt our Praiſes and our Tears. While thy Memory lives in our Breaſts, may thy Example be fruitful in our Lives: That our Meeting again may be in Joy unſpeakable, when God ſhall have wiped away all Tears from our Eyes.

FINIS.

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to be one amongſt four or five equal Competitors for a place, to be the fourth or fifth expectant of an inheritance; though in ſuch caſes there be the odds of three or four to one, yet the price that is ſet upon this, may be ſo proportioned, as either to reduce it to an equality, or make it a very advantageous bargain.

5. *A preſent Good may reaſonably be parted with, upon a probable expectation of a future Good which is more excellent.* Which is the caſe of Merchants, who have large eſtates in their own poſſeſſion, which they may ſafely keep by them; and yet chuſe to venture them upon a thouſand hazards, out of an apprehenſion that there is a greater probability of their gaining, than of their loſing by ſuch adventures.

And this would be much more reaſonable, if beſides the probability of gaining by theſe adventures, there were the like probability of their being utterly undone and ruined, if they ſhould neglect or refuſe to venture.

The greater the advantage is, the more reaſonable muſt it be to adventure for it. If it be reaſonable for a man to run the venture of 20 *l.* for the gain

gain of a hundred pounds, much more for a thouſand.

The reaſon why men are moved to believe a probability of gain by adventuring their ſtocks into ſuch Foraign Countries as they have never ſeen, and of which they have made no trial, is from the Teſtimony of other Credible perſons, who profeſs to have known thoſe places, and the advantages of traffick thither by their own experience. And this is generally accounted a ſufficient argument to perſwade others unto the like trials.

The reaſon which moved men to adventure for the firſt diſcovery of unknown Countries, is, becauſe they had fair probabilities to perſwade them, that there were ſuch places, which would probably afford very gainful Traffique.

And upon the ſame ground, if any conſiderable number of men, ſuch whom we eſteem the moſt wiſe and the moſt honeſt, ſhould aſſure us, that they did firmly believe, (though they did not know it by experience), that there was ſuch an undiſcovered Country, to which if men would make any ventures, their gains would be a thouſand times more than could be expected by any other way

way of Traffique; and that upon this perſwaſion, they themſelves did reſolve to venture their eſtates, and ſhould withal offer ſuch arguments for the reaſonableneſs of what they aſſert, as to any men, whoſe judgments were unprejudiced, would render it much more probable than the contrary: In this caſe, he that would act rationally, according to ſuch rules and principles as all mankind do obſerve in the government of their actions, muſt be perſwaded to do the like, unleſs he would be counted fooliſh, and one that did affect ſingularity.

6. 6. *A preſent Evil is to be endured, for the avoiding of a probable future Evil, which is far greater.* Which is the reaſon of mens undergoing the miſchiefs and hardſhips of War, the charges and vexations of Law-ſuits, the trouble of Faſting and Phyſick. A man will endure the pain of hunger and thirſt, and refuſe ſuch meats and drinks as are moſt grateful to his appetite, if he be perſwaded that they will endanger his health, eſpecially if he believe that they are poiſoned. He will chuſe to take nauſeous offenſive Phyſick, upon a probable expectation, that he may thereby prevent

vent or cure a dangerous ſickneſs.

The greater the Evil is, the more reaſon is there to venture the loſs of a leſs Good, or the ſuffering of a leſs evil, for the eſcaping of it. 7.

A *Scheme* of Moral Principles.

There are ſeveral *kinds* of Creatures in the world, and ſeveral *degrees* of dignity amongſt them, ſome being more excellent than others, *Animate* more than *Inanimate*, *Senſitives* more than *Vegetatives*, and *Men* more than *Brutes*. It is a greater preheminence to have *life*, than to be without it; to have *life* and *ſenſe*, than to have *life* only; to have *life*, *ſenſe*, and *reaſon*, than to have only *life* and *ſenſe*. Poſtulatum.

That which doth conſtitute any thing in its being, and diſtinguiſh it from all other things, is called the *Form* or *Eſſence* of ſuch a thing. Defin. 1.

That ſtate or condition by which the nature of any thing is advanced to the utmoſt perfection of which it is capable according to its rank and kind, is called the *chief end* or *happineſs* of ſuch a thing. Defin. 2.

The *nature* of *Plants* doth conſiſt in

having a *Vegetative* Soul, by which they receive nouriſhment and growth, and are enabled to multiply their kind.

The utmoſt perfection which this kind of Being is capable of, is to grow up to a ſtate of maturity, to continue unto its natural period, and to propagate its kind.

The *nature* of *Brutes* (beſides what is common to them with *Plants*) doth conſiſt in having ſuch faculties, whereby they are capable of apprehending external objects, and of receiving pain or pleaſure from them.

The *perfection* proper to theſe doth conſiſt in ſenſitive pleaſures, or the enjoying of ſuch things as are grateful to their appetites and ſenſes.

The *nature* of *Man* (beſides what is common to him with *Plants* and *Brutes*) doth conſiſt in that faculty of Reaſon, whereby he is made capable of Religion, of apprehending a Deity, and of expecting a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Which are capacities common to all mankind, notwithſtanding the utmoſt endeavours that can be uſed for the ſuppreſſing of them; and which no other Creature in this viſible world, except Man, doth partake of.

The

The *happineſs* of man doth conſiſt in the perfecting of this faculty; that is, in ſuch a ſtate or condition as is moſt agreeable to reaſon, and as may entitle him to the Divine favour, and afford him the beſt aſſurance of a bleſſed eſtate after this life.

That which every man doth and muſt propoſe unto himſelf, is the being in as good a condition as he is capable of, or as is reaſonable for him to expect. And the deſire of this is not properly a *duty* or a *moral vertue*, about which men have a liberty of Acting, but 'tis a *natural principle*, like the deſcent of heavy bodies, it flows neceſſarily from the very frame of our natures; men muſt do ſo, nor can they do otherwiſe.

The Cuſtomary Actions of men, conſidered as *Voluntary*, and as *capable of Reward* or *Puniſhment*, are ſtyled *Moral.* Defin. 3.

As that which hath a fitneſs to promote the Well-fare of man conſidered as a *Senſitive* Being, is ſtyled *Natural Good*; ſo that which hath a fitneſs to promote the Well-fare of man as a *Rational voluntary and free Agent*, is ſtyled *Moral Good.* And the contrary to it *Moral Evil.* Defin. 4.

Ax. 1. That which is morally *good* is to be *deſired* and proſecuted, that which is *evil* is to be *avoided.*

Ax. 2. The greater *congruity* or *incongruity* there is in any thing to the reaſon of Mankind, and the greater tendency it hath, to *promote* or *hinder* the perfection of mans nature, ſo much greater degrees hath it of moral *Good* or *Evil.* To which we ought to proportion our *Inclination* or *Averſion.*

There is in ſome things ſuch a natural decency and fitneſs, as doth render them moſt agreeable to our reaſon, and will be ſufficient to recommend them to our practice, abſtracting from all conſiderations of Reward. As in loving thoſe who are kind to us, and from whom we receive benefit: In compenſating Good with Good, and not with Evil.

It is moſt ſuitable both to the Reaſon and Intereſt of mankind, that every one ſhould ſubmit themſelves to him, upon whom they depend for their Well-being, by doing ſuch things as may render them Acceptable to him.

It is a deſireable thing for a man to have the aſſiſtance of others in his need and diſtreſs. And 'tis not reaſonable for him to expect this from others, unleſs he

he himſelf be willing to ſhew it to others.

The *rational* nature and the *Perfection* belonging to it being more noble than the *Senſitive*, Therefore *Moral* Good is to be preferred before *Natural*, and that which is *Morally* Evil is more to be *hated* and avoided, than that which is Natural. Ax. 3.

A *preſent Natural Good* may be parted with upon a probable expectation of a *future Moral good.* Ax. 4.

A *preſent Natural Evil* is to be endured for the probable avoiding of a *future Moral Evil.* Ax. 5.

CHAP. III.

Some Propoſitions neceſſary to be premiſed for the removing of ſeveral prejudices in Debates about Religion.

BEſides what hath been already ſuggeſted concerning the firſt foundations to be laid, in order to a diſcourſe about Natural Religion, I ſhall in the next place offer to conſideration theſe ſeven following Propoſitions, as being very proper to prevent or obviate the Cavils of Sceptical captious men.

1. *Such things as in themſelves are equally true and certain, may not yet be capable of the ſame* kind *or* degree *of Evidence as to us.* As for inſtance, *That there was ſuch a man as King* Henry *the Eighth, that there are ſuch places as* America, *or* China. I ſay theſe things may in themſelves be equally true and certain with thoſe other matters, *That we now ſee and are awake, That the three Angles in a Triangle are equal to two right ones.* Though for the firſt of theſe we have only

only the teſtimony of others, and humane tradition, whereas for the other we have ſenſitive proof, and Mathematical demonſtration. And the reaſon is becauſe all Truths are in themſelves equal, according to that ordinary Maxim, *Veritas non recipit magis & minus.* And therefore nothing can be more irrational than for a man to doubt of, or deny the truth of any thing, becauſe it cannot be made out, by ſuch kind of proofs of which the nature of ſuch a thing is not capable. A man may as well deny there is any ſuch thing as *Light* or *Colour*, becauſe he cannot *hear* it; or *ſound*, becauſe he cannot *ſee* it, as to deny the truth of other things becauſe they cannot be made out by ſenſitive or demonſtrative proofs. The kinds of Probation for ſeveral things being as much diſproportioned, as the objects of the ſeveral ſenſes are to one another.

2. *Things of ſeveral kinds may admit and require ſeveral ſorts of proofs, all which may be good in their kind.* The Philoſopher hath long ago told us, that according to the divers nature of things, ſo muſt the Evidences for them be; and that 'tis an argument of an undiſciplined wit not to acknowledg this. He that is rational and judicious will expect no other

2. *Ariſtot.* Eth. lib. 1. cap. 3. Metaph. lib. 1. cap. ult.

kind of Arguments in any caſe than the ſubject-matter will bear. How incongruous would it be for a Mathematician to perſwade with eloquence, to uſe all imaginable inſinuations and intreaties that he might prevail with his hearers to believe that *three and three make ſix*. It would be altogether as vain and improper in matters belonging to an Orator to pretend to ſtrict Demonſtration. All things are not capable of the ſame kind of Evidence. Though the Concluſions in *Mathematicks*, by reaſon of the *abſtracted* nature of thoſe Sciences, may be demonſtrated by the cleareſt and moſt unqueſtionable way of Probation to our reaſon, yet it is not rational to expect the like proof, in ſuch other matters as are not of the like nature. This he himſelf applys to *Moral* things, which being not of ſuch *ſimple abſtracted* natures, but depending upon *mixed* circumſtances, are not therefore capable of ſuch kind of Demonſtrative proofs. 'Tis a ſaying of *Jamblicus*, That demonſtrations are not to be expected in matters concerning God and divine things. Nor is this any greater prejudice to the certainty of ſuch things, than it is that God is inviſible. And thus likewiſe it is, for the ſame reaſon, with many parti-

Protrept. in Symbol. 25.

particular concluſions in *Natural Philoſophy*. And as for *matters of Fact*, concerning Times, Places, Perſons, Actions, which depend upon *Story* and the relation of others, theſe things are not capable of being proved by ſuch ſcientifical Principles as the others are. Now no ſober man can deny but that ſeveral things in *Moral* and in *Natural* Philoſophy are in themſelves as abſolutely and as certainly true, and as firmly believ'd by us, as any *Mathematical* principle or concluſion can be. From whence I infer this, That it is not, ought not to be, any prejudice to the Truth or Certainty of any thing, that it is not to be made out by ſuch kind of proofs, of which the nature of that thing is not capable, provided it be capable of ſatisfactory proofs of another kind.

3. *When a thing is capable of good proof in any kind, men ought to reſt ſatisfy'd in the beſt evidence for it, which that kind of things will bear, and beyond which better could not be expected, ſuppoſing it were true.* They ought not to expect either ſenſible proof, or demonſtration for ſuch matters as are not capable of ſuch proofs, ſuppoſing them to be true. Becauſe otherwiſe nothing muſt be aſſented to and believed, but that which hath the higheſt 3.

Evi-

Evidence: All other things being to be looked upon, as uncertain and doubtful, and wholly excluded from all poſſibility of being known. And at this rate, men muſt believe nothing at all in ſtory, becauſe ſuch things cannot be demonſtrated; and 'tis poſſible that the reſt of Mankind might have combined together to impoſe upon them by theſe relations. And how abhorrent ſuch Sceptical Principles muſt needs be to common reaſon, I need not ſay. Thoſe who will pretend ſuch kind of grounds for their disbelief of any thing, will never be able to perſwade others, that the true cauſe why they do not give their Aſſent is becauſe they have no *reaſon* for it, but becauſe they have no mind to it. *Nolle in cauſa eſt, non poſſe prætenditur.*

And on the other ſide, when we have for the proof of any thing, ſome of the higheſt kinds of Evidence, in this caſe it is not the ſuggeſtion of a meer poſſibility, that the thing may be otherwiſe, that ought to be any ſufficient cauſe of doubting.

To which I ſhall only add, that we may be unqueſtionably ſure of many things as to their *exiſtence*, and yet we may not be able to explain the nature of

of them. No man in his wits can make any doubt, whether there be ſuch things as Motion, and Senſation, and Continuity of Bodies: And yet theſe things are commonly eſteemed inexplicable. So that our not being able to ſee to the bottom of things, and to give a diſtinct account of the *nature* and *manner* of them, can be no ſufficient cauſe to doubt of their *being*.

4. *The mind of man may and muſt give a firm aſſent to ſome things, without any kind of heſitation or doubt of the contrary, where yet the Evidences for ſuch things are not ſo infallible, but that there is a poſſibility, that the things may be otherwiſe.* (*i.e.*) There may be an *indubitable* certainty, where there is not an *infallible* certainty. And that kind of certainty which doth not admit of any doubt, may ſerve us as well to all intents and purpoſes, as that which is infallible. A man may make no doubt, whether he himſelf were baptized, whether ſuch perſons were his parents, of which yet he can have no other Evidence than Tradition, and the Teſtimony of others. Who is there ſo wildly Sceptical as to queſtion, whether the Sun ſhall riſe in the Eaſt, and not in the North or Weſt, or whether it ſhall 4.

riſe

riſe at all: Becauſe the contrary is not impoſſible, and doth not imply any Contradiction? Suppoſe that in digging of the Earth amongſt ſome ancient ruins, a man ſhould find a round flat piece of Metal, in the exact ſhape of an old Medal, with the Image and Inſcription of one of the *Roman* Emperours. Or ſuppoſe he ſhould dig up a large ſtone, of the ſhape of an ancient Tomb-ſtone, with a diſtinct Inſcription upon it, of the name and quality of ſome perſon ſaid to be buried under it. Can any rational man doubt, whether one of theſe were not a piece of Coyn, and the other a Grave-ſtone? or ſhould a man be bound to ſuſpend his aſſent and belief of this, barely upon this ground, becauſe 'tis poſſible that theſe might have been the natural ſhapes of that particular Metal and Stone, and that thoſe which ſeem to be letters or figures engraven or emboſſed upon it, may be nothing elſe but ſome caſual dents or cavities, which by the various motions and temper of the matter did happen to them, amongſt thoſe many millions of other figures which they were capable of? Who would not think ſuch a man to be ſtrangely wild, and irrational, who could frame to himſelf any real ſcruples from

from ſuch Conſiderations as theſe? Why, 'tis the ſame kind of abſurd dotage that Scepticks in Religion are guilty of, in ſuſpending their aſſent meerly upon this ground, becauſe ſome Arguments for it do not ſo infallibly conclude, but that there is a poſſibility things may be otherwiſe. He that will raiſe to himſelf, and cheriſh in his mind, any real doubts, according to the meer poſſibility of things, ſhall not be able to determine himſelf to the belief or practice of any thing. He muſt not ſtay within doors, for fear the houſe ſhould fall upon him, for that is poſſible: nor muſt he go out, leſt the next man that meets him ſhould kill him, for that alſo is poſſible. And ſo muſt it be for his doing or forbearing any other action. Nay I add further, *that* man is ſure to be deceived in very many things, who will doubt of every thing, where 'tis poſſible he may be deceived.

I appeal to the common judgment of Mankind, whether the humane nature be not ſo framed, as to acquieſce in ſuch a *Moral certainty*, as the nature of things is capable of; and if it were otherwiſe, whether that Reaſon which belongs to us, would not prove a burden and a torment to us, rather than a priviledg, by keep-

keeping us in a continual ſuſpenſe, and thereby rendring our conditions perpetually reſtleſs and unquiet? Would not ſuch men be generally accounted out of their wits, who could pleaſe themſelves, by entertaining *actual hopes* of any thing, meerly upon account of the poſſibility of it; or torment themſelves with *actual fears*, of all ſuch evils as are poſſible? Is there any thing imaginable more wild and extravagant amongſt thoſe in Bedlam, than this would be? Why, *Doubt* is a kind of *fear*, and is commonly ſtyled *formido oppoſiti*, and 'tis the ſame kind of madneſs for a man to *doubt* of any thing, as to *hope for*, or *fear* it, upon a meer poſſibility.

5. 5. *'Tis ſufficient that matters of Faith and Religion be propounded in ſuch a way, as to render them highly credible, ſo as an honeſt and teachable man may willingly and ſafely aſſent to them, and according to the rules of Prudence be juſtified in ſo doing.* Nor is it either *Neceſſary* or *Convenient*, that they ſhould be eſtabliſhed by ſuch cogent Evidence, as to neceſſitate aſſent. Becauſe this would not leave any place for the vertue of *Believing*, or the freedom of our obedience; nor any ground for Reward and Puniſhment.

ment. It would not be thank-worthy for a man to believe that which of neceſſity he muſt believe, and cannot otherwiſe chuſe.

Rewards and Puniſhments do properly belong to *free* Actions, ſuch as are under a mans power, either to do or forbear; not to ſuch as are *neceſſary*. There is no more reaſon to reward a man for believing that four is more than three, than for being hungry or ſleepy; Becauſe theſe things do not proceed from *choice*, but from *natural neceſſity*. A man muſt do ſo, nor can he do otherwiſe.

I do not ſay, That the Principles of Religion are meerly *probable*, I have before aſſerted them to be *Morally certain*. And that to a man who is careful to preſerve his mind free from prejudice, and to *conſider*, they will appear *unqueſtionable*, and the *deductions* from them *demonſtrable*: But now becauſe that which is neceſſary to beget this certainty in the mind, namely, *impartial Conſideration*, is in a mans power, therefore the *belief* or *disbelief* of theſe things is a proper ſubject for *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*.

There would be little reaſon for the Scripture ſo much to magnifie the Grace of *Faith*, as being ſo great a vertue and ſo acceptа-

ceptable to God, if every one were neceſſitated to it, whether he would or no. And therefore God is pleaſed to propoſe theſe matters of belief to us in ſuch a way, as that we might give ſome Teſtimony of our teachable diſpoſitions, and of our obedience by our aſſent to them. *Ut ſermo Evangelii tanquam lapis eſſet Lydius, ad quem ingenia ſanabilia explorarentur*, as the Learned *Grotius* ſpeaks concerning the Doctrine of the Goſpel, whereby God was pleaſed as with a Touch-ſtone to prove and try what kind of tempers men are of, whether they are ſo ingenuous as to accept of ſufficient Evidence, in the confirmation of a holy Doctrine. And the Scripture doth in ſeveral places make uſe of the word *Faith*, according to this notion of it, as it conſiſts in a readineſs of mind to cloſe with and give aſſent unto things upon ſuch evidence as is in it ſelf ſufficient. To which purpoſe is that expreſſion of our Saviour to *Thomas*, *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen and yet have believed*, Joh. 20. 29. Signifying it to be a more excellent commendable and bleſſed thing for a man to yield his aſſent, upon ſuch evidence as is in it ſelf ſufficient, without inſiſting upon more; It denotes good inclinations in men towards Religion, and that they have worthy thoughts of the Divine

Grot. de Verit. lib. 2.

Divine power and goodneſs, when they are willing to ſubmit unto ſuch arguments in the confirmation of a holy doctrine, as to unprejudiced perſons are in themſelves ſufficient to induce belief. It was this diſpoſition that was commended in the *Bereans*, Act. 17. 11 for which they are ſtyled εὐγενέστεροι, more ingenuous, teachable and candid, *more noble* than others, *Becauſe they received the word with all readineſs of mind.* (*i.e.*) Were ready and willing to aſſent to the Goſpel, upon ſuch evidence as was in it ſelf ſufficient to convince reaſonable and unprejudiced men.

And on the other ſide, it was the want of this diſpoſition which is condemned, *Mat.* 13. 58. where 'tis ſaid that our Saviour *did not many mighty works in his own Country, becauſe of their unbelief*: (*i.e.*) That prejudice which there was upon them, by their knowledg of his mean parentage and birth, and their ignorance of his Divine commiſſion and high calling, did indiſpoſe them for an equal judgment of things, and render them unteachable. And having tried this by doing *ſome* mighty works amongſt them he would not do *many*, becauſe of their incapacity of receiving benefit by them.

Wicked men are in the Scripture-phraſe ſtyled υἱοὶ ἀπειθείας *filii inſnaſibilitatis*, unper- Eph. 2. 2, 5, 6.

perſwadable men, ſuch as no reaſon can convince. And elſe-where they are ſtyled ἄλογοι, which we tranſlate unreaſonable men. But the word may ſignifie abſurd, contumacious perſons, who are not to be fixed by any Principles, whom no *Topics* can work upon, being directly oppoſite to this vertue of Faith, as appears by the next clauſe, *For all men have not Faith.*

Col. 3. 6. 2 Theſ. 3. 2. ἄλογοι.

Suppoſing Mankind to be endowed (as all other things are) with a natural principle, whereby they are ſtrongly inclined to ſeek their own preſervation and happineſs; and ſuppoſing them to be *rational* and *free* Creatures, able to *judg* of, and to chuſe the means conducing to this end: Nothing can be more reaſonable in this caſe, than that ſuch Creatures ſhould be under the obligation of accepting ſuch evidence, as in it ſelf is ſufficient for their conviction.

6. *When there is no ſuch evident certainty, as to take away all kind of doubting; in ſuch caſes, a judgment that is equal and impartial muſt incline to the greater probabilities.* That is no juſt ballance, wherein the heavieſt ſide will not preponderate. In all the ordinary affairs of life men uſe to guide their Actions by this Rule, namely, to incline to that which is moſt probable and likely, when they cannot attain to any clear unqueſti-

6.

queſtionable certainty. And that man would be generally counted a fool who ſhould do otherwiſe. Now let it be ſuppoſed, that ſome of the great Principles in Religion, ſhould not ſeem to ſome men altogether ſo evident as to be wholly unqueſtionable, yet ought their aſſent ſtill to incline to the greater probability.

When it is ſaid to be a duty for men to believe any thing, or to acquieſce in ſuch kind of Evidence as is ſufficient for the proof of it: The meaning is not, as if there were any moral obligation upon the *Underſtanding*, which is proper only unto the *Will*; but the meaning is, That men ſhould be careful to preſerve their minds free from any wilful prejudice and partiality, that they ſhould ſeriouſly attend to, and conſider the Evidence propoſed to them, ſo as to take a juſt eſtimate of it. For though it be true, that the judgments of men muſt by a natural neceſſity, preponderate on that ſide where the greateſt Evidence lies; ſuppoſing the mind to be equally diſpoſed, and the ballance to be juſt; yet muſt it withal be granted to be a particular virtue and felicity to keep the mind in ſuch an equal frame of judging. There are ſome men, who have ſufficient abilities to diſcern betwixt the true difference of things;

but what through their vicious affections and voluntary prejudices, making them unwilling that ſome things ſhould be true; what through their inadvertency or neglect to conſider and compare things together, they are not to be convinced by plain Arguments; not through any inſufficiency in the *evidence*, but by reaſon of ſome defect or corruption in the *faculty* that ſhould judg of it. Now the neglect of keeping our minds in ſuch an equal frame, the not applying of our thoughts to conſider of ſuch matters of moment, as do highly concern a man to be rightly informed in, muſt needs be a vice. And though none of the Philoſophers (that I know of) do reckon this kind of *Faith* (as it may be ſtyled), this teachableneſs and equality of mind in conſidering and judging of matters of importance, amongſt other *intellectual virtues*; yet to me it ſeems, that it may juſtly challenge a place amongſt them; and that for this reaſon, becauſe the two extremes of it by way of *Exceſs* and *Defect*, I mean the aſſenting unto ſuch things upon inſufficient Evidence, which is called *Credulity*, and the not aſſenting unto them upon ſufficient Evidence, which is called *Incredulity* or *unbelief*, are both of them Vices.

Now

Now where the *Exceſs* and *Defect* do make Vices, or ſuch things as ought not to be, there the *Mediocrity* muſt denote ſomething that ought to be, and conſequently muſt be a Virtue, and have in it the obligation of Duty.

7. *If in any matter offered to Conſideration, the probabilities on both ſides be ſuppoſed to be equal:* (In this caſe, though an impartial judgment cannot be obliged to incline to one ſide rather than to the other, becauſe our *Aſſent* to things muſt by a Neceſſity of Nature, be proportioned to our *Evidence* for them; And where neither ſide doth preponderate, the ballance ſhould hang even) *Yet even in this caſe, men may be obliged to order their Actions in favour of that ſide, which appears to be moſt ſafe and advantageous for their own intereſt.* Suppoſe a man travelling upon the Road to meet with two doubtful ways, concerning neither of which he can have any the leaſt probability to induce him to believe that one is more like to be the true way to his journey's end, than the other; only he is upon good grounds aſſured, that in one of theſe ways he ſhall meet with much trouble, difficulty, danger, which the other is altogether free from: In this caſe, though a man be 7.

not bound to believe that one of them is a truer way than the other, yet is he obliged in prudence to take the ſafeſt.

Nay I add further, If the probabilities on the one hand ſhould ſomewhat preponderate the other, yet if there be no conſiderable hazard on that ſide which hath the leaſt probability, and a very great apparent danger in a miſtake about the other: In this caſe, prudence will oblige a man to do that which may make moſt for his own ſafety.

Theſe are thoſe preparatory Principles which I thought fit to premiſe, as a neceſſary foundation for any debate with captious men about theſe firſt grounds of Religion. And they are each of them (I think) of ſuch perſpicuity, as to need little more than the bare *Propoſal* of them, and the *Explication* of their Terms, to evince the truth of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Exiſtence of a Deity, *and the Arguments for it. The* I. *Argument, From the univerſal conſent and agreement of Mankind; and the Objections anſwered.*

THeſe things being premiſed, I betake my ſelf to that which was at firſt propoſed as the chief deſign of this Book, namely, to prove *the Reaſonableneſs and the Credibility of the Principles of Natural Religion.*

By *Religion*, I mean that general habit of Reverence towards the Divine nature, whereby we are inabled and inclined to worſhip and ſerve God after ſuch a manner as we conceive moſt agreeable to his will, ſo as to procure his favour and bleſſing.

I call that *Natural Religion*, which men might know, and ſhould be obliged unto, by the meer principles of *Reaſon*, improved by Conſideration and Experience, without the help of *Revelation.*

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